United Nations A/55/23 (Part I)

General Assembly

Distr.: General
2 August 2000

Original: English

Fifty-fifth session
Item 18 of the provisional agenda*
Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples on its work during 2000**

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Chapters I and II

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* A/55/150.

** The present document contains chapters I and II of the Special Committee's report to the General Assembly. Chapters III-XII of the report will be issued separately in document A/55/23 (Part II). Recommendations of the Special Committee to the General Assembly will be issued separately in document A/55/23 (Part III). The complete report will be issued as *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 23* (A/55/23).

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Letter of transmittal

8 September 2000

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit herewith to the General Assembly the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/91 of 6 December 1999. The report covers the work of the Special Committee during 2000.

(Signed) Peter D. **Donigi**
Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

His Excellency Mr. Kofi **Annan**
Secretary-General of the United Nations
New York

Chapter I
Establishment, organization and activities of the Special Committee

A. Establishment of the Special Committee

1. The Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples was established by the General Assembly pursuant to its resolution 1654 (XVI) of 27 November 1961. The Special Committee was requested to examine the application of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, and to make suggestions and recommendations on the progress and extent of the implementation of the Declaration.

2. At its seventeenth session, after considering the report of the Special Committee,[1] the General Assembly adopted resolution 1810 (XVII) of 17 December 1962, by which it enlarged the Special Committee with the addition of seven new members. It invited the Special Committee "to continue to seek the most suitable ways and means for the speedy and total application of the Declaration to all Territories which have not yet attained independence".

3. At the same session, by its resolution 1805 (XVII) of 14 December 1962 on the question of South West Africa, the General Assembly requested the Special Committee to discharge, mutatis mutandis, the tasks assigned to the Special Committee for South West Africa by resolution 1702 (XVI) of 19 December 1961. By its resolution 1806 (XVII) of 14 December 1962, the Assembly decided to dissolve the Special Committee for South West Africa.

4. At its eighteenth session, by resolution 1970 (XVIII) of 16 December 1963, the General Assembly decided to dissolve the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories and requested the Special Committee to study the information transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations. It also requested the Special Committee to take that information fully into account in examining the situation with regard to the implementation of the Declaration in each of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and to undertake any special study and prepare any special report it might consider necessary.

5. At the same session and at each subsequent session, the General Assembly, after considering the report of the Special Committee,[2] has adopted a resolution renewing the mandate of the Special Committee.

6. On the occasion of the tenth, twentieth, twenty-fifth and thirtieth anniversaries of the Declaration, the General Assembly, by approving the related reports of the Special Committee, adopted resolutions 2621 (XXV) of 12 October 1970, 35/118 of 11 December 1980, 40/56 of 2 December 1985 and 45/33 of 20 November 1990, containing a series of recommendations with a view to facilitating the speedy implementation of the Declaration.

7. At its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly, by adopting resolution 46/181 of 19 December 1991, endorsed as a plan of action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism the proposals contained in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General dated 13 December 1991 (A/46/634/Rev.1 and Corr.1). The plan, inter alia, contained the following provisions:

> "22. The Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, with the cooperation of the administering Powers, should:
>
> "(a) Prepare periodic analyses of the progress and extent of the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in each Territory;
>
> "(b) Review the impact of the economic and social situation on the constitutional and political advancement of Non-Self-Governing Territories;
>
> "(c) Organize during the Decade seminars in the Caribbean and Pacific regions alternately, as well as at United Nations Headquarters, to review the progress achieved in the implementation of the plan of action, with the participation of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, their elected representatives, the administering Powers, Member States, regional organizations,

specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and experts.

"23. The Special Committee should continue to seek, as a matter of priority, the full cooperation of administering Powers with regard to the dispatch of United Nations visiting missions to Non-Self-Governing Territories.

"24. The Special Committee, with the cooperation of the administering Powers, should make every effort to facilitate and encourage the participation of representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories in regional and international organizations, as well as in the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the Special Committee itself and other United Nations decolonization bodies."

8. At its fifty-fourth session, after considering the report of the Special Committee,[3] the General Assembly, on 6 December 1999, adopted resolution 54/91, in which, inter alia, it:

"6. *Approves* the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples covering its work during 1999, including the programme of work envisaged for 2000;[4]

"...

"8. *Requests* the Special Committee to continue to seek suitable means for the immediate and full implementation of the Declaration and to carry out those actions approved by the General Assembly regarding the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism in all Territories that have not yet exercised their right to self-determination, including independence, and in particular:

"(a) To formulate specific proposals to bring about an end to colonialism and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session;

"(b) To continue to examine the implementation by Member States of resolution 1514 (XV) and other relevant resolutions on decolonization;

"(c) To continue to pay special attention to the small Territories, including through the dispatch of visiting missions, and to recommend to the General Assembly the most suitable steps to be taken to enable the populations of those Territories to exercise their right to self-determination, including independence;

"(d) To develop a constructive programme of work on a case-by-case basis for the Non-Self-Governing Territories before the end of 2000 to facilitate the implementation of the mandate of the Special Committee and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, including resolutions on specific Territories;

"(e) To take all necessary steps to enlist worldwide support among Governments, as well as national and international organizations, for the achievement of the objectives of the Declaration and the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations;

"(f) To conduct seminars, as appropriate, for the purpose of receiving and disseminating information on the work of the Special Committee, and to facilitate participation by the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in those seminars;

"(g) To observe annually the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories, beginning on 25 May;

"...

"14. *Reaffirms* that the United Nations visiting missions to the Territories are an effective means of ascertaining the situation in the Territories as well as the wishes and aspirations of their inhabitants, and calls upon the administering Powers to continue to cooperate with the Special Committee in the discharge of its mandate and to facilitate visiting missions to the Territories;

"15. *Calls upon* the administering Powers that have not participated formally in the work of the Special Committee to do so at its session in 2000".

9. At the same session, the General Assembly also adopted 10 other resolutions and 4 decisions relating to specific Territories or other items on the agenda of the

Special Committee, as well as a number of other resolutions relevant to the work of the Special Committee, by which the Assembly entrusted the Special Committee with specific tasks in relation to those Territories and items. Those decisions are listed below.

1. Resolutions, consensus and decisions concerning specific Territories

Resolutions

Territory	*Resolution No.*	*Date of adoption*
Western Sahara	54/87	6 December 1999
New Caledonia	54/88	6 December 1999
Tokelau	54/89	6 December 1999
American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, St. Helena, Turks and Caicos Islands and United States Virgin Islands	54/90 A and B	6 December 1999

Decisions

Territory	*Decision No.*	*Date of adoption*
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	54/412	4 November 1999
East Timor	54/422	6 December 1999
Gibraltar	53/423	6 December 1999

2. Resolutions concerning other items

Item	*Resolution No.*	*Date of adoption*
Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations	54/83	6 December 1999
Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories	54/84	6 December 1999
Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations	54/85	6 December 1999
Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories	54/86	6 December 1999
Dissemination of information on decolonization	54/92	6 December 1999

3. Decision concerning other questions

Question	*Decision No.*	*Date of adoption*
Military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration	54/421	6 December 1999

10. At its 46th plenary meeting, on 4 November 1999, the General Assembly decided to defer consideration of the item entitled "Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)" and to include it in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fifth session (decision 54/412).

11. At its 84th plenary meeting, on 17 December 1999, the General Assembly adopted resolution 54/194,

in which it decided to conclude its consideration of the item entitled "Question of East Timor" and to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fifth session a new item entitled "The situation in East Timor during its transition to independence".

4. Other resolutions and decisions relevant to the work of the Special Committee

12. Other resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session that were relevant to the work of the Special Committee and that were taken into consideration by the Special Committee are listed in a note by the Secretary-General on the organization of work of the Special Committee (A/AC.109/2000/L.1).

5. Membership of the Special Committee

13. As of 1 January 2000, the Special Committee was composed of the following 24 members:

Antigua and Barbuda	Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Bolivia	Iraq
Chile	Mali
China	Papua New Guinea
Congo	Russian Federation
Côte d'Ivoire	Saint Lucia
Cuba	Sierra Leone
Ethiopia	Syrian Arab Republic
Fiji	Tunisia
Grenada	United Republic of Tanzania
India	Venezuela
Indonesia	Yugoslavia

A list of representatives who attended the meetings of the Special Committee in 2000 appears in documents A/AC.109/2000/INF/38 and Add.1.

B. Opening of the meetings of the Special Committee in 2000 and election of officers

14. The Deputy Secretary-General addressed the Special Committee at its 1st meeting, on 18 February 2000. The Chairman made a statement at that meeting. Statements were also made by the representatives of Antigua and Barbuda, Côte d'Ivoire, Chile, Sierra Leone, Grenada and Saint Lucia. The representative of New Zealand made a statement in its capacity as administering Power (see A/AC.109/2000/SR.1).

15. At the same meeting, the Special Committee unanimously elected the following officers:

Chairman:
Peter D. Donigi (Papua New Guinea)

Vice-Chairmen:
Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba)
Bernard Tanoh-Boutchoué (Côte d'Ivoire)

Rapporteur:
Fayssal Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic)

C. Organization of work

16. At its 1st meeting, on 18 February 2000, by adopting the suggestions relating to the organization of its work put forward by the Chairman (A/AC.109/2000/L.2) and subsequently revised by the Special Committee at its 3rd meeting, on 28 March 2000 (A/AC.109/2000/L.2/Rev.1), the Special Committee decided to maintain its Bureau as the only subsidiary body of the Committee. The Special Committee also decided to adopt the suggestions of the Chairman relating to the allocation of items and the procedure for their consideration (see A/AC.109/2000/L.2/Rev.1).

17. Statements relating to the organization of work were made at the 1st meeting by the Chairman and by the representative of Indonesia (see A/AC.109/2000/SR.1).

18. At the 5th meeting, on 5 July 2000, the Acting Chairman informed the Special Committee that the delegation of Spain had expressed the wish to participate in the proceedings of the Special Committee on the question of Gibraltar. The Special Committee decided to accede to the request.

19. At the 6th meeting, on 5 July 2000, the Acting Chairman informed the Special Committee that the delegation of Portugal had expressed the wish to participate in the proceedings of the Special Committee on the question of East Timor. The Special Committee decided to accede to the request.

20. At the 8th meeting, on 11 July 2000, the Acting Chairman informed the Special Committee that the delegations of Argentina, Brazil (on behalf of the States members of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) and Bolivia and Chile), Paraguay and Uruguay had expressed the wish to participate in the proceedings of the Special Committee on the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas). The Special Committee decided to accede to the request.

D. Meetings of the Special Committee and its subsidiary bodies

21. In keeping with its resolve to continue taking all possible measures to rationalize the organization of its work, and with the full and close cooperation of its entire membership, the Special Committee and its subsidiary body were again able to keep to a minimum the number of their formal meetings, as indicated below, by holding, whenever possible, informal meetings and extensive consultations through officers of the Special Committee.

1. Special Committee

22. The Special Committee held 15 meetings at Headquarters during 2000, as follows:

(a) First part of the session: 1st meeting, 18 February; 2nd meeting, 24 March; 3rd meeting, 28 March; and 4th meeting, 25 April;

(b) Second part of the session: 5th and 6th meetings, 5-20 July; 7th meeting, 10 July; 8th and 9th meetings, 11 July; 10th and 11th meetings, 12 July; 12th meeting, 17 July; and 13th meeting, 20 July.

23. During the session, the Special Committee considered in plenary meetings the following questions and adopted decisions thereon, as indicated below:

Question	*Meetings*	*Decision*
Question of sending visiting missions to Territories	5th	A/55/23 (Part II), chap. IV, para. 16
Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations	5th	A/55/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sect. A
Dissemination of information on decolonization	5th	A/55/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sect. G
Special Committee decision of 6 July 1999 concerning Puerto Rico	10th, 11th	A/55/23 (Part I), chap. I, para. 39
American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, St. Helena, Turks and Caicos Islands, United States Virgin Islands	7th, 9th, 13th	A/55/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sect. F
Tokelau	7th, 11th	A/55/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sect. E
Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories	12th	A/55/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sect. B
Military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration	12th	A/55/23 (Part III), sect. I
Gibraltar	5th	A/55/23 (Part II), para. 65
East Timor	6th	A/55/23 (Part II), paras. 54 and 56
New Caledonia	7th, 11th	A/55/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sect. D

Question	Meetings	Decision
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	8th	A/55/23 (Part II), para. 115
Western Sahara	6th	A/55/23 (Part II), para. 79
Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations	13th	A/55/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sect. C
Second Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism	13th	A/55/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sect. H

2. Subsidiary bodies

Bureau

24. At its 1st and 3rd meetings, on 18 February and 28 March 2000, by adopting the suggestions relating to the organization of its work put forward by the Chairman (A/AC.109/2000/L.2 and Rev.1), the Special Committee decided to maintain the Bureau as a subsidiary body of the Committee.

25. During the period covered by the present report, the Bureau held 15 meetings.

Working Group on the Economic and Social Council

26. On 30 June, on the suggestion of the Chairman, the Special Committee established a Working Group on the Economic and Social Council, which was entrusted with the task of preparation of an agenda and recommendations for the organization of the joint meeting of the Special Committee and the Economic and Social Council. The Working Group is composed of the representatives of Bolivia, China, Congo, Cuba, Fiji, India, Indonesia, the Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Sierra Leone, the Syrian Arab Republic and Venezuela. The representative of Cuba was appointed Chairman of the Working Group.

27. At its 13th meeting, on 20 July 2000, following the statement by the Chairman, the Special Committee adopted a report of the Special Committee on pending matters related to its work (A/AC.109/2000/L.15) without a vote.

E. Question of the list of Territories to which the Declaration is applicable

28. At its 1st and 3rd meetings, on 18 February and 28 March 2000, by adopting the suggestions relating to the organization of its work put forward by the Chairman (A/AC.109/2000/L.2 and Rev.1), the Special Committee decided to take the question of the list of Territories to which the Declaration is applicable as appropriate. In taking that decision, the Special Committee recalled that, in its report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session,[5] it had stated that, subject to any directives that the Assembly might wish to give in that connection, it would continue, as part of its programme of work for 2000, to review the list of Territories to which the Declaration applied. The Special Committee also recalled that, in paragraph 6 of its resolution 54/91, the Assembly had approved the report of the Special Committee, including the programme of work envisaged by the Special Committee for 2000.

29. At its 13th meeting, on 20 July 2000, the Special Committee decided to continue its consideration of the question of the list of Territories to which the Declaration is applicable at its next session, subject to any directives that the General Assembly might give at its fifty-fifth session (see A/AC.109/2000/L.15, para. 10).

Special Committee decision of 6 July 1999 concerning Puerto Rico[6]

30. At its 1st and 3rd meetings, on 18 February and 28 March 2000, by adopting the suggestions relating to the organization of its work put forward by the Chairman (A/AC.109/2000/L.2 and Rev.1), the Special Committee decided to take up as appropriate the item entitled "Special Committee decision of 6 July 1999 concerning Puerto Rico" and to consider it at plenary meetings.

31. At its 10th and 11th meetings, on 12 July 2000, the Chairman drew attention to a number of communications received from organizations

expressing the wish to be heard on Puerto Rico by the Special Committee. At the same meetings, the Special Committee agreed to accede to those requests and heard the representatives of the organizations concerned (see A/AC.109/2000/SR.10 and 11), as indicated below:

(a) 10th meeting

Eduardo Villanueva Muñoz, Colegio de Abogados de Puerto Rico; Julio A. Muriente Pérez, Nuevo Movimiento Independentista Puertorriqueño; Jorge Farinacci Garcia, Frente Socialista; Edwin Pagan, on behalf of ProLibertad; Reverend Eunice Santana, on behalf of Commission of the Churches on International Affairs; Fernando J. Martín, Partido Independentista Puertorriqueño; Javier Colón Morera, Instituto Puertorriqueño de Relaciones Internacionales; Nilda Luz Rexach, National Advancement for Puerto Rican Culture; Jose Adames, Al Frente; Salvador Vargas, Jr., Concerned Puerto Rican Americans; Hector Bengochea, on behalf of Gran Oriente Nacional and Gran Logia Nacional de Puerto Rico; Jose Paralitici, Todo Puerto Rico con Vieques; Edgardo Díaz Díaz, Sociedad Bolivariana de Puerto Rico; Juan Maria Bras, on behalf of Causa Común Independentista; Lolita Lebron, on behalf of Puerto Rico, Mi Patria; and Marisol Corretjer, on behalf of Partido Nacionalista de Puerto Rico

(b) 11th meeting

Wilfredo Santiago-Valiente, United Statehooders Organization of New York, Inc.; Vanessa Ramos, American Association of Jurists; James Harris, on behalf of Socialist Workers Party; Elliott Monteverde-Torres, Center for Constitutional Rights; Jaime A. Medina, Working Group on Puerto Rico; Wilma E. Reveron, on behalf of Congreso Nacional Hostosiano and Comité Puerto Rico en la ONU; Colette Pean, on behalf of Nord-Sud XXI and December 12th Movement International Secretariat; Alfredo Marrero, on behalf of Comité Pro Rescate y Desarrollo de Vieques; Jose Rivera, Estadidad 2000 Puerto Rico; and Olga Mardach Miguel, Women for Peace and Justice for Vieques, Puerto Rico.

32. At the 10th meeting, the representative of Cuba made a statement on a point of order (see A/AC.109/2000/SR.10).

33. At the 11th meeting, the representative of Cuba introduced draft resolution A/AC.109/2000/L.11.

34. At the same meeting, the Rapporteur of the Special Committee introduced the report on the item contained in document A/AC.109/2000/L.3.

35. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Iraq and Venezuela (see A/AC.109/2000/SR.11).

36. At the same meeting, the Special Committee adopted draft resolution A/AC.109/2000/L.11 without a vote (A/AC.109/2000/24).

37. At the same meeting, the representative of Chile made a statement in explanation of position (see A/AC.109/2000/SR.11).

38. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Bolivia and Cuba (see A/AC.109/2000/SR.11).

39. The text of resolution A/AC.109/2000/24, adopted by the Special Committee at its 11th meeting, on 12 July 2000, appears below:

"*The Special Committee*,

"*Bearing in mind* the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, as well as the resolutions and decisions of the Special Committee concerning Puerto Rico,

"*Considering* that the decade of the 1990s, which will soon draw to a close, was proclaimed by the General Assembly, in its resolution 43/47 of 22 November 1988, as the Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, and the eighteen resolutions and decisions adopted by the Special Committee on the question of Puerto Rico, contained in the reports of the Special Committee to the General Assembly,

"*Recalling* that 25 July 2000 marks the one hundred and second anniversary of the intervention in Puerto Rico by the United States of America,

"*Also recalling* the diverse initiatives taken by the political representatives of Puerto Rico and the United States in the past eleven years, which have thus far failed to set in motion the process of decolonization of Puerto Rico,

"*Stressing* the need for the United States to lay the groundwork for the full implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), and resolutions and decisions of the Special Committee concerning Puerto Rico,

"*Taking into account* the proposals to convene a sovereign Constituent Convention of the people of Puerto Rico as part of the search for realistic procedures which would make it possible to launch the process of decolonization of Puerto Rico,

"*Aware* that Vieques Island, Puerto Rico, has been used for over fifty years by the United States Marines to carry out military manoeuvres, thus limiting access by the civilian population to a space scarcely a quarter of the island, and having an impact on the health of the population, the environment and the economic and social development of the Territory,

"*Regretting* that, after a year of inactivity, which was welcomed by the people of Puerto Rico, the Government of the United States has resumed its military manoeuvres and bombings on Vieques Island, which is inhabited, removing and incarcerating peaceful demonstrators and imposing further restrictions on the civilian population,

"*Noting* the consensus among the Puerto Rican people on the urgency of halting military manoeuvres on Vieques Island and on the return of occupied land to the people of Puerto Rico,

"*Also noting* the consensus among the people of Puerto Rico in favour of the release of all Puerto Rican prisoners who have been serving sentences in United States prisons on cases related to Puerto Rico's independence,

"*Noting with satisfaction* the release of eleven Puerto Rican political prisoners,

"*Further noting* that the Final Document of the Thirteenth Ministerial Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Cartagena de Indias on 8 and 9 April 2000, reaffirms the right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence on the basis of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and requests the Special Committee to continue actively pursuing the issue of Puerto Rico,

"*Having heard* statements and testimonies representative of various viewpoints among the people of Puerto Rico and their social institutions,

"*Having considered* the report of the Rapporteur of the Special Committee on the implementation of the resolutions concerning Puerto Rico,[7]

"1. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence in conformity with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and the applicability of the fundamental principles of that resolution to the question of Puerto Rico;

"2. *Reiterates* that the Puerto Rican people constitute a Latin American and Caribbean nation that has its own and unequivocal national identity;

"3. *Reaffirms its hope*, and that of the international community, that the Government of the United States of America will assume its responsibility of expediting a process that will allow the Puerto Rican people to fully exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence, in conformity with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and the resolutions and decisions of the Special Committee concerning Puerto Rico;

"4. *Notes with satisfaction* that, during the past year, progress has been achieved towards the implementation of a mechanism ensuring the full participation of representatives of all viewpoints prevailing in Puerto Rico, such as the proposals to convene a sovereign Constituent Conference of the people of Puerto Rico;

"5. *Expresses its hope* that the General Assembly will give comprehensive consideration to the question of Puerto Rico in all its aspects;

"6. *Encourages* the Government of the United States, in line with the need to guarantee to the Puerto Rican people their legitimate right to self-determination and the protection of their human rights, to order the halt of its armed forces' military drills and manoeuvres on Vieques Island, which is inhabited, return the occupied land to the people of Puerto Rico, halt the persecution, arrests and harassment of peaceful

demonstrators, respect fundamental human rights, such as the right to health and economic development, and decontaminate the impact areas;

"7. *Welcomes* the release of eleven Puerto Rican prisoners and expresses its hope that the President of the United States will release all Puerto Rican political prisoners serving sentences in United States prisons on cases related to the struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico;

"8. *Notes with satisfaction* the report prepared by the Rapporteur, in compliance with its resolution of 6 July 1999;

"9. *Requests* the Rapporteur to report to the Special Committee in 2001 on the implementation of the present resolution;

"10. *Decides* to keep the question of Puerto Rico under continuous review."

F. Consideration of other matters

1. Matters relating to the small Territories

40. At its 1st and 3rd meetings, on 18 February and 28 March 2000, by adopting the suggestions relating to the organization of its work put forward by the Chairman (A/AC.109/2000/L.2 and Rev.1), the Special Committee decided to include in its agenda the item entitled "Matters relating to the small Territories" and to consider it at its plenary meetings.

41. In taking those decisions, the Special Committee took into account the provisions of the relevant General Assembly resolutions, including resolution 54/91, in paragraph 8 (c) of which the Assembly requested the Special Committee to continue to pay special attention to the small Territories, in particular through the dispatch of regular visiting missions, and to recommend to the Assembly the most suitable steps to be taken to enable the populations of those Territories to exercise their right to self-determination, including independence.

42. During the year, the Special Committee gave extensive consideration to all phases of the situation obtaining in the small Territories (see A/55/23 (Part II), chaps. X-XII).

43. At its 7th meeting, on 10 July 2000, with consent of its members, the Special Committee heard a statement by Carlyle Corbin, Representative for External Affairs of the Government of the United States Virgin Islands, on matters relating to small Territories (see A/AC.109/2000/SR.7).

2. Compliance of Member States with the Declaration and other resolutions on decolonization

44. At its 1st and 3rd meetings, on 18 February and 28 March 2000, by adopting the suggestions relating to the organization of its work put forward by the Chairman (A/AC.109/2000/L.2 and Rev.1), the Special Committee decided to consider in plenary meetings the question of compliance of Member States with the Declaration and other relevant resolutions on decolonization.

45. The Special Committee took that decision into account in its consideration of specific items.

3. Question of holding a series of meetings away from Headquarters

46. At its 1st and 3rd meetings, on 18 February and 28 March 2000, by adopting the suggestions relating to the organization of its work put forward by the Chairman (A/AC.109/2000/L.2 and Rev.1), the Special Committee decided to take up the question of holding a series of meetings away from Headquarters as appropriate.

47. Having regard to its programme of work for 2001, the Special Committee, at its 13th meeting, on 20 July 2000, considered the question of holding meetings away from Headquarters, taking into account the provisions of paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 1654 (XVI) of 27 November 1961 and paragraph 3 (9) of resolution 2621 (XXV) of 12 October 1970, by which the Assembly authorized the Special Committee to meet elsewhere than at United Nations Headquarters whenever and wherever such meetings might be required for the effective discharge of its functions. At the same meeting, the Special Committee decided that it would consider accepting such invitations as might be received in 2001 and that, when particulars of such meetings had become known, it would request the Secretary-General to seek the necessary budgetary provision in accordance with established procedure (see A/AC.109/2000/L.15, paras. 2 and 3).

4. Pattern of conferences

48. At its 1st and 3rd meetings, on 18 February and 28 March 2000, by adopting the suggestions relating to the organization of its work put forward by the Chairman (A/AC.109/2000/L.2 and Rev.1), the Special Committee decided to take up as appropriate the item entitled "Pattern of conferences". In so doing, the Special Committee was conscious of the fact that it had initiated some important measures in rationalizing its work methods, many of which were subsequently incorporated in a number of resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly. Further recalling the measures it had taken theretofore in that connection, the Special Committee decided to continue to exercise its initiatives in the effective utilization of the limited conference resources and the further reduction of its documentation requirements.

49. The Special Committee also continued the practice of circulating communications and information material, as far as possible, in the form of informal notes and aides-mémoires in the original language of submission, thus curtailing documentation requirements and accruing considerable savings for the Organization. A list of the documents issued by the Special Committee in 2000 is contained in the annex to the present chapter.

50. At its 13th meeting, on 20 July 2000, the Special Committee considered the item and noted that, during the year, it had closely followed the guidelines set forth in the resolutions of the General Assembly on the pattern of conferences, in particular resolution 54/248 of 23 December 1999. By organizing its programme of work effectively and holding extensive consultations, the Committee strived to keep the number of its formal meetings to a minimum. However, in view of the need to conduct a critical review of the Committee's work and the need to consider the programme of its future activities in the last year of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, the Special Committee decided, taking into account its probable workload for 2001, to consider holding its meetings in accordance with the following schedule:

(a) Plenary

February/March	As required
June/July	Up to 30 meetings (6-8 meetings a week)

(b) Bureau

February/July	20 meetings

It was understood that that programme would not preclude the holding of any ad hoc meetings that might be warranted and that the Special Committee might, in early 2001, review the scheduled meetings on the basis of any new developments. The Special Committee decided, subject to any directives given by the General Assembly, to strive, while fulfilling its mandate, to keep its meetings to a minimum (see A/AC.109/2000/L.15, paras. 5-7).

5. Control and limitation of documentation

51. At its 13th meeting, on 20 July 2000, the Special Committee considered the question of the control and limitation of documentation and noted that, during the year, it had taken further measures to control and limit its documentation in compliance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, in particular resolutions 34/50 of 23 November 1979, 39/68 D of 13 December 1984, 51/211 B of 18 December 1996 and 54/248 C of 23 December 1999. The Special Committee noted that, in its resolution 50/206 B of 23 December 1995, the General Assembly had approved the recommendation of the Special Committee to replace its verbatim records by summary records. Having reviewed the need for such records, the Special Committee decided to maintain its summary records (see A/AC.109/2000/L.15, paras. 8 and 9).

6. Cooperation and participation of the administering Powers in the work of the Special Committee

52. In compliance with the provisions of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the delegations of New Zealand and Portugal, as representatives of the administering Powers concerned, continued to participate, in accordance with established procedure, in the related work of the Special Committee (see A/55/23 (Part II), chaps. IX and XI).

53. The delegation of France participated in the work of the Special Committee during its consideration of the question of New Caledonia (see A/55/23 (Part II), chap. IX).

54. The delegations of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America did not participate in the work of the Special

Committee.[8] However, during informal consultations with the Special Committee held in May 2000, both administering Powers expressed their desire to continue informal dialogue with the Special Committee (see sects. I and J of the present chapter).

55. In a related context, the Special Committee, at its 5th meeting, on 5 July 2000, adopted resolution A/AC.109/2000/22 on the question of sending visiting missions to Territories. By that resolution, the Special Committee noted with appreciation that, at the invitation of the Government of New Zealand, a visiting mission had been dispatched to Tokelau in July 1994. It called upon the administering Powers to cooperate or continue to cooperate with the United Nations by receiving United Nations visiting missions in the Territories under their administration (see A/55/23 (Part II), para. 16).

7. Participation of representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories in the work of the Special Committee

56. At its 13th meeting, on 20 July 2000, the Special Committee considered the question of the participation of representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories in its work and decided that the participation of representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories in the work of the Special Committee at Headquarters, as recommended by the Plan of Action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, should continue to be facilitated through the reimbursement by the United Nations of the expenses relating to their participation under the terms of the guidelines amended by the Committee and approved by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session (see A/AC.109/L.1791, annex, and A/AC.109/L.1804). In that regard, the Special Committee decided to consider the guidelines at its plenary meetings with a view to amending them further, where appropriate (see A/AC.109/2000/L.15, para. 13).

8. Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of All Colonial Territories Fighting for Freedom, Independence and Human Rights

57. Information on the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of All Colonial Territories Fighting for Freedom, Independence and Human Rights is contained in A/55/23, chapter II, annex, paragraphs 15-18 and document A/55/23 (Part II), chapter III, paragraph 8.

9. Representation at seminars, meetings and conferences of intergovernmental and other organizations

58. At its 13th meeting, on 20 July 2000, the Special Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the Committee continue to be represented at seminars, meetings and conferences organized by United Nations bodies and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations active in the field of decolonization. In keeping with its decision of 18 February 2000, the Committee would authorize its Chairman to hold consultations, as appropriate, concerning its participation in those meetings, as well as the level of representation, when accepting invitations. In accordance with established practice and on the basis of the principle of rotation, the Chairman would hold consultations with the Bureau members who, in turn, would consult with the members of the Committee from their respective regional groups. The Special Committee also decided that the Chairman would also have consultations with those members of the Committee whose regional group was not represented in the Bureau. It also decided to recommend that the General Assembly make appropriate budgetary provisions to cover such activities in 2001 (see A/AC.109/2000/L.15, para. 4).

10. Report of the Special Committee to the General Assembly

59. At its 1st and 3rd meetings, on 18 February and 28 March 2000, by adopting the suggestions relating to the organization of its work put forward by the Chairman (A/AC.109/2000/L.2 and Rev.1), and in accordance with paragraph 31 of General Assembly decision 34/401 on the rationalization of the procedures and organization of the Assembly, the Special Committee decided to follow the procedure adopted at its 1999 session[9] in connection with the formulation of its recommendations to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

60. At its 13th meeting, on 20 July 2000, with reference to its decision taken at the 5th meeting, on 5 July 2000, the Special Committee, on the proposal of the Chairman, authorized the Rapporteur to reformulate the Committee's draft resolutions and decisions into the format of the General Assembly as well as to

reorganize and simplify the format of the report of the Committee and to submit directly to the Assembly various chapters of the report in accordance with established practice and procedure.

11. Other questions

61. At its 1st and 3rd meetings, on 18 February and 28 March 2000, by adopting the suggestions relating to the organization of its work put forward by the Chairman (A/AC.109/2000/L.2 and Rev.1), the Special Committee decided, in its examination of specific Territories, to take into account the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolutions and decisions listed in the note by the Secretary-General on the organization of work of the Special Committee (A/AC.109/2000/L.1, para. 10). That decision was taken into account during the consideration of specific Territories and other items in plenary meetings.

G. Relations with United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

1. Economic and Social Council

62. In connection with the Special Committee's consideration of the implementation of the Declaration by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations, and in accordance with paragraph 17 of General Assembly resolution 54/85 relating to the item, consultations were held between the President of the Economic and Social Council and the Chairman of the Special Committee to consider appropriate measures for coordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies in implementing the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. On the proposal of the Chairman, on 30 June 2000 the Special Committee established a Working Group entrusted with a task of preparation of an agenda and recommendations for the organization of the joint meeting of the Council and the Special Committee. The Working Group is composed of the representatives of Bolivia, Congo, Cuba, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Sierra Leone, Syrian Arab Republic and Venezuela. The representative of Cuba was appointed as the Chairman of the Working Group. The Chairman of the Special Committee participated in the Council's consideration of the related item.

2. Commission on Human Rights

63. During the year, the Special Committee followed closely the work of the Commission on Human Rights with regard to the question of the right of peoples to self-determination and its application to peoples under colonial domination, and to the question of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in any part of the world, with particular reference to colonial and other dependent Territories.

64. In its consideration of the Territories concerned, the Special Committee took into account the relevant resolutions adopted by the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-sixth session, in 2000, including resolutions on the question of Western Sahara (2000/2), the right to development (2000/5), the question of the realization in all countries of the economic, social and cultural rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and study of special problems which the developing countries face in their efforts to achieve these human rights (2000/9), the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (2000/49), the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (2000/56), the working group of the Commission on Human Rights to elaborate a draft declaration in accordance with paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 49/214 of 23 December 1994 (2000/57), and the work of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (2000/83). The Special Committee further took into account the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, including resolutions 54/147, 54/150, 54/155, 54/174 and 54/175 of 17 December 1999.

3. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

65. During the year, having regard to the relevant provisions of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Special Committee continued to follow the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (see also paras. 73 and 74 below).

4. Specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations

66. In accordance with the requests contained in the relevant General Assembly resolutions, the Special Committee continued its consideration of the question of the implementation of the Declaration by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations (see also para. 62 above). An account of the Special Committee's consideration of the question is set out in chapter VII of the present report (see A/55/23 (Part II)).

67. During the year, the Special Committee adopted decisions relating to the extension of assistance to the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories. Those decisions are reflected in recommendations of the Special Committee to the General Assembly (see A/55/23 (Part III), chap. XIII).

5. Organization of African Unity

68. Bearing in mind its previous decisions to maintain contact with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on a regular basis in order to assist in the effective discharge of its mandate, the Special Committee, as in previous years, followed closely the work of OAU.

6. Caribbean Community

69. Bearing in mind its previous decisions to maintain contact with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) on a regular basis in order to assist in the effective discharge of its mandate, the Special Committee, as in previous years, followed closely the work of CARICOM.

7. South Pacific Forum

70. The Special Committee continued to follow closely the work of the South Pacific Forum concerning the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the South Pacific region.

8. Movement of Non-Aligned Countries

71. The Special Committee continued to follow closely the work of the Movement of the Non-Aligned Countries regarding the issue of decolonization. Bernard Tanoh-Boutchoué (Côte d'Ivoire), Vice-Chairman of the Special Committee, represented the Special Committee at the Thirteenth Ministerial Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, on 8 and 9 April 2000. Jimmy Ovia (Papua New Guinea) represented the Special Committee at the Group of 77 Summit ("The South Summit") held at Havana from 10 to 14 April 2000.

9. Non-governmental organizations

72. Having regard to the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolutions 54/91 and 54/92, the Special Committee continued to follow closely the activities of non-governmental organizations having a special interest in the field of decolonization. The participation of non-governmental organizations in the work of the Special Committee during the period under review is covered in detail in the Special Committee documents (see A/AC.109/2000/19) and the present report (see para. 31 above; chap. II, annex, below; and A/55/23 (Part II), para. 56). The related decisions of the Special Committee are listed in chapter XIII of the present report.

H. Action relating to international conventions/studies/programmes

1. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

73. At its 1st and 3rd meetings, on 18 February and 28 March 2000, by adopting the suggestions relating to the organization of its work put forward by the Chairman (A/AC.109/2000/L.2 and Rev.1), the Special Committee decided to include in the agenda of its 2000 session an item entitled "International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination" and to consider it at its plenary meetings.

74. The Special Committee continued to monitor related developments in the Territories, having regard to the relevant provisions of article 15 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (General Assembly resolution 2106 A (XX), annex).

2. Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination

75. The Special Committee continued to take into account the provisions of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations bodies concerned relating to the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination,

including in particular General Assembly resolution 54/154 of 17 December 1999 and the relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/54/299).

I. Review of work

76. As noted elsewhere in the present report, the reform processes initiated by the Special Committee in 1991, which brought about a number of changes and improvements in its approach, methods and procedures, continued to be actively pursued in 2000. The measures adopted by the Special Committee included the streamlining and consolidation of a number of its resolutions. With regard to the preparation of the consolidated draft resolution, the Special Committee held extensive informal consultations with the administering Powers concerned and other States as well as with the representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Special Committee's recommendation to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session on 12 Territories was consolidated into two resolutions (A/AC.109/2000/26 and A/AC.109/2000/30; see A/55/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sects. E and F).

77. The Special Committee also reviewed its resolutions on information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations (A/AC.109/2000/21), the question of sending visiting missions to Territories (A/AC.109/2000/22), economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/AC.109/2000/27) and implementation of the Declaration by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations (A/AC.109/2000/29), as well as its decision on military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration (A/AC.109/2000/28).

78. As noted in chapter II of the present report, the Special Committee held a Pacific regional seminar at Majuro, Marshall Islands, from 16 to 18 May 2000 in implementation of the Plan of Action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/181 of 19 December 1991.

79. In accordance with the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly, the Special Committee continued to seek suitable means for the implementation of resolution 1514 (XV) in all Territories to which the Declaration is applicable and formulated specific proposals and recommendations in that regard.

80. On the question of the publicity to be given to the work of the United Nations in the field of decolonization, the Special Committee adopted a resolution (A/AC.109/2000/20) which it recommends to the General Assembly for action at its fifty-fifth session (see A/55/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sect. G).

81. The Special Committee also continued its review of the list of Territories to which the Declaration is applicable. With regard to its decision of 6 July 1999 concerning Puerto Rico, the Special Committee heard a number of representatives of organizations concerned and adopted a resolution on the matter (A/AC.109/2000/24), which is set out in paragraph 39 of the present chapter.

82. During the period under review, the Special Committee continued the critical review of its work and programme of future work by holding a number of informal meetings. The Special Committee initiated discussion on the case-by-case work programmes for each of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and held a series of informal consultations on this matter with the administering Powers concerned with a view to improving cooperation between the Committee and the administering Powers (see sect. J below).

83. Having reviewed the progress with implementation of the Plan of Action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism and having noted with concern that the Plan of Action could not be completed by the year 2000, the Special Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly declare the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism and adopted a resolution in this regard (A/AC.109/2000/31) which is reproduced in the form of recommendation to the Assembly in chapter XIII, section 4, of the present report (A/55/23 (Part III)).

84. In accordance with the guidelines established by the General Assembly, the Special Committee was able during the year to reduce the number of its formal meetings and to minimize the wastage resulting from cancellation of scheduled meetings.

J. Future work

85. In accordance with the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly since 1961 and subject to further directives from the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session, the Special Committee intends to continue during 2001 to pursue its efforts in bringing a speedy and unconditional end to colonialism in all its forms and manifestations, in accordance with Article 73 of the Charter and the Declaration.

86. Given the significance of the end of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, the Special Committee concluded the critical review of its work and made an assessment of the effectiveness of its activities and the areas in which it could effect improvements.

87. On the basis of informal papers on the conceptual framework, objectives and activities of the Committee prepared by the Acting Chairman of the Special Committee in 1998 and some delegations, without prejudice to the position of any delegation (see A/AC.109/L.1886, annex, A/AC.109/2000/L.2/Add.1, A/AC.109/1999/20 and A/AC.109/1999/21). In 1999, the Chairman and the Bureau continued informal contacts with the administering Powers as requested by the Special Committee in order to explore means to improve cooperation. During 2000, the Special Committee and the administering Powers agreed, on an informal basis, on a non-paper outlining a general work programme that would serve as a reference in the preparation of individual work programmes for specific Territories. The Special Committee and the administering Powers also agreed to prepare work programmes for American Samoa and Pitcairn. It was also agreed that the administering Powers would ensure the participation of representatives of these Non-Self-Governing Territories at every stage of the discussions.

88. In order to discharge its responsibilities, the Special Committee will keep under continuous review any developments concerning each Territory. It will also review the compliance by Member States, particularly the administering Powers, with the relevant decisions and resolutions of the United Nations. In that connection, the Special Committee intends to improve and strengthen its dialogue and cooperation with the administering Powers.

89. The Special Committee will continue to submit conclusions and recommendations on the specific measures necessary to achieve the objectives set out in the Declaration and the relevant provisions of the Charter. The Special Committee also intends to continue its review of the list of Territories to which the Declaration is applicable.

90. Subject to any directives that the General Assembly might give upon the conclusion of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, declared by the Assembly by its resolution 43/47 and with regard to the Plan of Action endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/181, the Special Committee will continue to conduct seminars for the purpose of receiving and disseminating information on the situation in Non-Self-Governing Territories in order to facilitate implementation of its mandate. In this connection, the Special Committee will hold a seminar in the Caribbean region in 2001.

91. The Special Committee will continue to seek the views of the representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories and in that regard will seek the implementation of General Assembly resolutions calling upon the administering Powers to cooperate or to continue to cooperate with the Special Committee by inviting United Nations visiting missions to Territories under their administration. Having regard to the constructive role played by such missions in the past, the Special Committee continues to attach the utmost importance to the dispatch of visiting missions as a means of collecting adequate and first-hand information on conditions in the Territories and on the wishes and aspirations of the peoples concerning their future status. Accordingly, the Special Committee will continue to seek the full cooperation of the administering Powers.

92. The Special Committee will continue to pay special attention to the specific problems of the small island Territories, which constitute the overwhelming majority of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Special Committee is aware that, in addition to general problems facing developing countries, those island Territories also suffer handicaps arising from the interplay of such factors as size, remoteness, geographical dispersion, vulnerability to natural disasters, fragility of ecosystems, constraints in transport and communications, great distances from market centres, a highly limited internal market, lack of natural resources, weak indigenous technological capacity, the acute problem of obtaining freshwater

supplies, heavy dependence on imports and a small number of commodities, depletion of non-renewable resources, migration, particularly of individuals with high-level skills, shortage of administrative personnel and heavy financial burdens. The Special Committee will continue to recommend measures to facilitate a sustained and balanced growth of the fragile economies of those Territories and increased assistance in the development of all the sectors of their economies, with particular emphasis on programmes of diversification. The Special Committee believes that issues facing Non-Self-Governing Territories, such as environmental problems; the impact of hurricanes, volcanoes and other natural disasters, beach and coastal erosion and drought; finding ways and means to fight drug trafficking, money laundering and other illegal and criminal activities; and the illegal exploitation of the marine resources of the Territories and the need to utilize those resources for the benefit of their peoples, should remain the focus of its attention. In so doing, the Special Committee will continue to take into consideration the recommendations of the regional seminars that it has organized since 1990.[10]

93. It is the intention of the Special Committee to continue to follow closely the implementation of the Declaration by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations. In so doing, the Special Committee, as in the past, will review the actions taken or envisaged by international organizations in the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. The Special Committee will hold further consultations and contacts with those organizations, as appropriate. It will also be guided by the results of consultations held in 2000 between its Chairman and the President of the Economic and Social Council in the context of the relevant decisions of the Assembly, the Council and the Special Committee itself. Furthermore, the Special Committee will maintain close contact with the secretaries-general and senior officials of regional organizations, such as OAU, OAS, the Caribbean Community and the South Pacific Forum, particularly those in the Caribbean and Pacific regions. The objective of those contacts is to facilitate the effective implementation of the decisions of the various United Nations bodies and to foster cooperation between the specialized agencies and the regional organizations in providing assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories in a given region.

94. The Special Committee will also strive to follow up on the General Assembly's request that the participation of Non-Self-Governing Territories in the work of relevant meetings and conferences of the agencies and organizations be facilitated so that the Territories can benefit from the related activities of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system. Such participation would constitute an effective means of promoting the progress of the peoples of those Territories, enabling them to enhance their standard of living and achieve greater self-sufficiency.

95. The Special Committee intends to take into account the agreement reached with the European Union on resolution A/AC.109/2000/27 on economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and to continue its cooperation with interested States to ensure that the interests of the peoples of those Territories are protected. The Special Committee will continue its study of military activities and arrangements in the Territories and will also cooperate with interested States in that regard.

96. Taking into consideration its mandate on Western Sahara and its primary responsibility to ensure the implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) for all Non-Self-Governing Territories, and in accordance with a decision it had taken at its 1397th meeting, on 23 August 1991, the Special Committee may dispatch a mission to Western Sahara during the holding of the referendum in the Territory.

97. Taking into account the views expressed by the representatives of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories at the regional seminars organized by the Special Committee since 1990, as well as the recommendations contained in the Plan of Action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, the Special Committee will continue to consider, in cooperation with the administering Powers, how to intensify and improve the participation of the representatives of those Territories in the work of the Special Committee within existing resources.

98. In the light of the provisions of the General Assembly resolutions concerning the pattern of conferences and taking into consideration its experience in previous years as well as its probable workload for 2001, the Special Committee has

approved a tentative programme of meetings for 2001, which it commends to the Assembly for approval.

99. The Special Committee has consistently reiterated the importance of disseminating information on decolonization as an instrument for furthering the aims of the Declaration. Accordingly, the Special Committee will continue to use opportunities such as the regional seminars and the observance of the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of All Colonial Territories Fighting for Freedom, Independence and Human Rights to disseminate information on its activities and on the Territories in an effort to mobilize world public opinion to support and assist the people of the Territories in bringing about the speedy and unconditional end of colonialism in all its forms and manifestations.

100. The Special Committee suggests that, when the General Assembly, at its fifty-fifth session, examines the question of the implementation of the Declaration, it may wish to take into account the various recommendations of the Special Committee that are reflected in the relevant chapters of the present report and, in particular, to endorse the proposals outlined in the present section in order to enable the Special Committee to carry out the tasks it envisages for 2001. The Special Committee recommends that the Assembly renew its appeal to the administering Powers to take all necessary steps for the implementation of the Declaration and the relevant United Nations resolutions, in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples of the Territories concerned. In that connection, the Special Committee recommends that the Assembly request all the administering Powers to become involved with the work of the Special Committee in the discharge of its mandate and, in particular, to participate actively in the work relating to the Territories under their respective administrations. The Special Committee also recommends that the Assembly continue to invite the administering Powers to allow representatives of the Territories concerned to participate in the discussions in the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) and the Special Committee on the items relating to their respective Territories. Furthermore, the Assembly might also wish to renew its appeal to all States, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system to comply with the various requests addressed to them by the Assembly and the Security Council in their relevant resolutions.

101. The Special Committee recommends that, in approving the programme of work outlined above, the General Assembly make adequate provision to cover the activities that the Special Committee envisages for 2001. In that regard, the Special Committee recalls that the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 includes resources to provide for the programme of work of the Special Committee for 2001 based on the level of activities approved for 2000, without prejudice to the decisions to be taken by the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session. On that basis, the Special Committee understands that, should any additional provisions be required over and above those included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, proposals for supplementary requirements would be made to the General Assembly for its approval. Finally, the Special Committee expresses the hope that the Secretary-General will continue to provide it with all the facilities and personnel necessary for the discharge of its mandate, taking into account the various tasks assigned to it by the Assembly as well as those arising from decisions taken by it during the current year.

K. Conclusion of the 2000 session

102. At its 13th meeting, on 20 July 2000, the Special Committee decided to authorize its Rapporteur to prepare and submit directly to the General Assembly the various chapters of the report of the Special Committee in accordance with established practice and procedure.

103. At the same meeting, the Chairman made a statement on the occasion of the closing of the 2000 session of the Special Committee (see A/AC.109/2000/SR.13).

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventeenth Session, Annexes*, addendum to agenda item 25, document A/5238.

[2] See the reports of the Special Committee submitted to the General Assembly at its eighteenth to fifty-fourth sessions. For the most recent, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 23* (A/53/23); and ibid., *Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 23* (A/54/23).

[3] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 23* (A/54/23).

[4] Ibid., chap. I, sect. J.

[5] Ibid., chap. I, para. 87.

[6] Ibid., chap. I, para. 38.

[7] A/AC.109/2000/L.3.

[8] For the explanation of their non-participation, see documents A/47/86, A/42/651, annex, and *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 23* (A/41/23), chap. I, paras. 76 and 77.

[9] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 23* (A/54/23), chap. I, paras. 58 and 59.

[10] See A/AC.109/1040 and Corr.1, A/AC.109/1043, A/AC.109/1114, A/AC.109/1159, A/AC.109/2030, A/AC.109/2058, A/AC.109/2089, A/AC.109/2121, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 23* (A/54/23), annex II, and chapter II of the present report, annex.

Annex

List of documents of the Special Committee, 2000

Document symbol	*Title*	*Date*
Documents issued in the general series		
A/AC.109/2000/INF/38 and Add.1	List of Delegations	3 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/1	International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: Pacific Regional Seminar to Review the Political, Economic and Social Conditions in the Small Island Non-Self-Governing Territories, to be held at Majuro, Marshall Islands, from 16 to 18 May 2000: guidelines and rules of procedure	15 March 2000
A/AC.109/2000/2	Pitcairn (working paper)	27 March 2000
A/AC.109/2000/3	American Samoa (working paper)	29 April 2000
A/AC.109/2000/4	New Caledonia (working paper)	25 April 2000
A/AC.109/2000/5	Tokelau (working paper)	26 April 2000
A/AC.109/2000/6	Guam (working paper)	22 May 2000
A/AC.109/2000/7 and Corr.1	Western Sahara (working paper)	22 May 2000 25 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/8	Saint Helena (working paper)	24 May 2000
A/AC.109/2000/9	Montserrat (working paper)	24 May 2000
A/AC.109/2000/10	Gibraltar (working paper)	22 May 2000
A/AC.109/2000/11 and Corr.1	Falkland Islands (Malvinas) (working paper)	7 June 2000 30 June 2000
A/AC.109/2000/12	East Timor (working paper)	22 June 2000
A/AC.109/2000/13	Bermuda (working paper)	15 June 2000
A/AC.109/2000/14	Cayman Islands (working paper)	22 June 2000
A/AC.109/2000/15	Anguilla (working paper)	28 June 2000
A/AC.109/2000/16	Turks and Caicos Islands (working paper)	26 June 2000
A/AC.109/2000/17 and Corr.1	United States Virgin Islands (working paper)	23 June 2000 14 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/18	British Virgin Islands (working paper)	26 June 2000

Document symbol	*Title*	*Date*
A/AC.109/1999/19	Dissemination of information on decolonization during the period from June 1999 to May 2000: report of the Department of Public Information	22 June 2000
A/AC.109/2000/20	Dissemination of information on decolonization: resolution adopted by the Special Committee at its 5th meeting, on 5 July 2000	5 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/21	Information on Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations: resolution adopted by the Special Committee at its 5th meeting, on 5 July 2000	5 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/22	Question of sending visiting missions to Territories: resolution adopted by the Special Committee at its 5th meeting, on 5 July 2000	5 July 2000
A/AC.109/1999/23	Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas): resolution adopted by the Special Committee at its 11th meeting, on 11 July 2000	11 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/24	Special Committee decision of 6 July 1999 concerning Puerto Rico: resolution adopted by the Special Committee at its 12th meeting, on 12 July 2000	12 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/25	Question of New Caledonia: resolution adopted by the Special Committee at its 11th meeting, on 12 July 2000	12 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/26	Question of Tokelau: resolution adopted by the Special Committee at its 11th meeting, on 12 July 2000	13 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/27	Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories: resolution adopted by the Special Committee at its 12th meeting, on 17 July 2000	17 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/28	Military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration: decision adopted by the Special Committee at its 12th meeting, on 17 July 2000	17 July 2000

Document symbol	*Title*	*Date*
A/AC.109/2000/29	Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations: resolution adopted by the Special Committee at its 13th meeting, on 20 July 2000	20 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/30	Questions of the Non-Self-Governing Territories of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands: resolution adopted by the Special Committee at its 13th meeting, on 20 July 2000	21 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/31	Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: resolution adopted by the Special Committee at its 13th meeting, on 20 July 2000	20 July 2000
Documents issued in the limited series		
A/AC.109/2000/L.1	Organization of work: relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly: Note by the Secretary-General	1 February 2000
A/AC.109/2000/L.2 and Rev.1	Organization of work: Note by the Chairman	28 February 2000 28 March 2000
A/AC.109/2000/L.3	Special Committee decision of 11 August 1998 concerning Puerto Rico: report prepared by the Rapporteur of the Special Committee	21 June 2000
A/AC.109/1999/L.4	Dissemination of information on decolonization: draft resolution submitted by the Chairman	27 June 2000
A/AC.109/2000/L.5	Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations: draft resolution submitted by the Chairman	27 June 2000
A/AC.109/2000/L.6	Question of sending visiting missions to Territories: draft resolution submitted by the Chairman	26 June 2000

Document symbol	*Title*	*Date*
A/AC.109/2000/L.7	Question of New Caledonia: draft resolution submitted by Fiji and Papua New Guinea	27 June 2000
A/AC.109/2000/L.8	Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas): draft resolution submitted by Bolivia, Chile, Cuba and Venezuela	6 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/L.9 and Rev.1 and Rev.1/Corr.1	Questions of the Non-Self-Governing Territories of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands: consolidated draft resolution submitted by the Chairman	16 July 1999 18 July 2000 19 July 2000
A/AC.109/1999/L.10 and Rev.1	Question of Tokelau: draft resolution submitted by Fiji and Papua New Guinea	26 June 2000 11 July 2000
A/AC.109/1999/L.11	Special Committee decision of 6 July 1999 concerning Puerto Rico: draft resolution submitted by Cuba	27 June 2000
A/AC.109/2000/L.12	Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories: draft resolution submitted by the Chairman	8 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/L.13	Military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration: draft decision submitted by the Chairman	8 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/L.14	Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations: draft resolution submitted by the Chairman	8 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/L.15	Report of the Special Committee	21 July 2000
A/AC.109/2000/L.16	Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: draft resolution submitted by the Chairman	18 July 2000

Chapter II
International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism

1. On 19 December 1991, at its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 46/181, entitled "International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism", and the Plan of Action contained in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General dated 13 December 1991 (A/46/634/Rev.1 and Corr.1). In the Plan of Action, "aimed at ushering in, in the twenty-first century, a world free from colonialism", the Assembly, inter alia, requested the Special Committee:

> "[to] organize during the Decade seminars in the Caribbean and Pacific regions alternately, as well as at United Nations Headquarters, to review the progress achieved in the implementation of the plan of action, with the participation of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, their elected representatives, the administering Powers, Member States, regional organizations, specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and experts."

2. At its 1st and 3rd meetings, on 18 February and 28 March 2000, the Special Committee, mindful of the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly in the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and by approving the recommendation of its Chairman on the organization of work of the Special Committee for the year (A/AC.109/2000/L.2 and Rev.1), decided to allocate to plenary meetings of the Special Committee, as appropriate, the question of the "International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism".

3. The Special Committee considered the questions of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism and the Caribbean Regional Seminar to review the political, economic and social conditions in the small island Non-Self-Governing Territories, to be held at Majuro, Marshall Islands, from 16 to 18 May 2000, at its 1st, 4th and 12th meetings, on 18 February, 25 April and 17 July 2000.

4. The Special Committee had before it the guidelines and rules of procedure for the Pacific Regional Seminar (A/AC.109/2000/1).

5. At its 4th meeting, on 25 April, following a statement by the Chairman, the Special Committee approved the composition of the official delegation of the Special Committee to the Pacific Regional Seminar (see A/AC.109/2000/SR.4).

6. The Special Committee also decided to invite United Nations organs, agencies and institutions to apprise the Secretary-General of actions they had taken in implementation of General Assembly resolution 46/181 relating to the Plan of Action and to submit a report to the Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, subject to any directives that the Assembly might give in this regard (see A/AC.109/2000/L.15, para. 12).

7. At the 12th meeting, on 17 July 2000, the Chairman of the Special Committee drew attention to the draft report of the Pacific Regional Seminar, which had been circulated to members of the Special Committee as a conference room paper.

8. At the same meeting, the Rapporteur of the Pacific Regional Seminar introduced the draft report of the Seminar, which contained a detailed account of the organization and proceedings of the Seminar (see A/AC.109/2000/SR.12).

9. At the same meeting, following the statements made by the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Fiji and Antigua and Barbuda, the Committee decided to adopt the draft report of the Pacific Regional Seminar and to include it in its report to the General Assembly. The full text of the report of the Pacific Regional Seminar is contained in the annex to the present chapter.

10. At the 13th meeting, on 20 July 2000, the Special Committee continued consideration of the question of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

11. Having reviewed the progress with implementation of the Plan of Action of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism and having noted with concern that the Plan of Action could not be completed by the year 2000, the Special Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly declare the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (see A/AC.109/2000/L.15, para. 11).

12. At the same meeting, the Chairman drew attention to a draft resolution on the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (A/AC.109/2000/L.16).

13. At the same meeting, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran made a statement, wherein he introduced an oral amendment to the draft resolution by which the words "the resolution on decolonization" in the operative paragraph 3 would be replaced by the words "relevant resolutions of the United Nations on decolonization" (see A/AC.109/2000/SR.13).

14. At the same meeting, the Special Committee adopted draft resolution A/AC.109/2000/L.16, as orally amended, without a vote (A/AC.109/2000/31) which is reproduced in the form of a recommendation of the Special Committee to the General Assembly in chapter XIII, section I, of the present report (see A/55/23 (Part III)).

Annex

Pacific Regional Seminar to review the political, economic and social conditions in the small island Non-Self-Governing Territories, held at Majuro, Marshall Islands, from 16 to 18 May 2000

Rapporteur: Fayssal **Mekdad** (Syrian Arab Republic)

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I. Introduction

1. On 22 November 1988, the General Assembly adopted resolution 43/47, on the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, which read in part as follows:

> "*The General Assembly*,
>
> "...
>
> "1. *Declares* the period 1990-2000 as the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism;
>
> "2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session a report that would enable the Assembly to consider and adopt an action plan aimed at ushering in the twenty-first century, a world free from colonialism."

2. At its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 46/181 of 19 December 1991 on the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, and the plan of action contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/46/634/Rev.1 and Corr.1) aimed at ushering in, in the twenty-first century, a world free from colonialism, in which, inter alia, it requested the Special Committee to organize during the Decade seminars in the Caribbean and Pacific regions alternately, as well as at United Nations Headquarters, to review the progress achieved in the implementation of the plan of action, with the participation of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories,[a] their elected representatives, the administering Powers, Member States, regional organizations, specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and experts.

3. In its resolution 46/70 of 11 December 1991, calling for coordinated assistance of the specialized agencies to the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories, the General Assembly stated that,

> "in addition to general problems facing developing countries, the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories, many of which are small island Territories, also suffer handicaps arising from the interplay of such factors as their size, remoteness, geographical dispersion, vulnerability to natural disasters, the fragility of their ecosystems, constraints in transport and communications, great distances from market centres, ... weak indigenous technological capacity, the acute problem of obtaining freshwater supplies, heavy dependence on imports and a small number of commodities, depletion of non-renewable resources, migration, particularly of personnel with high-level skills, shortage of administrative personnel and heavy financial burdens".

4. In its resolution 54/91 of 6 December 1999, the General Assembly approved the report of the Special Committee,[b] which inter alia called for the holding of a seminar in the Pacific region, to be organized by the Special Committee, in 2000.

5. As stated in the guidelines and rules of procedure for the Seminar (A/AC.109/2000/1), the purpose of the Seminar was to assess the situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, particularly their constitutional evolution towards self-determination by the year 2000. The Seminar was also to identify areas in which the international community could increase and enhance its participation in programmes of assistance and adopt a comprehensive and integrated approach to ensure the political and sustainable socio-economic development of the Territories concerned.

6. The topics considered by the Seminar will assist the Special Committee and the participants in making an evaluation of the situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Seminar gave pre-eminence to a broad range of views of the peoples of those Territories. It also sought to secure the participation of organizations and institutions that are actively involved in the political, economic and social development of those Territories and of non-governmental organizations with long and established experience in island Territories.

7. The contributions of the participants served as a basis for the conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar to be carefully studied by the Special Committee with a view to submitting proposals to the General Assembly concerning the fulfilment of the objectives of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism and setting new objectives for the year 2000 and beyond.

II. Organization of the Seminar

8. The Seminar was held at Majuro, Marshall Islands, from 16 to 18 May 2000.

9. The Seminar held six meetings in which States Members of the United Nations, representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories, administering Powers, non-governmental organizations, regional organizations and experts took part. The list of participants is given in appendix VII to the present report. The seminar was organized to encourage an open and frank exchange of views.

10. The Seminar was conducted by Peter D. Donigi, Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations and Chairman of the Special Committee, with the participation of the following members of the Special Committee: Bolivia, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Russian Federation and Syrian Arab Republic. France and New Zealand participated in the Seminar in their capacity as administering Powers. The following Member States of the United Nations also participated in the seminar: Argentina, Marshall Islands (host country), Morocco, Nauru and Spain.

11. At the 1st meeting, on 16 May 2000, the following members of the Special Committee were appointed officers of the Seminar: Bernard Tanoh-Boutchoué (Côte d'Ivoire), Rafael Dausá Céspedes (Cuba) and Vladimir Zaemsky (Russian Federation) as Vice-Chairmen, Fayssal Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) as Rapporteur and Chairman of the Drafting Group. The Drafting Group was composed of the representatives of Bolivia, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation.

12. The agenda of the Seminar was as follows:

1. International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism:
   - (a) Assessment and forward look: follow-up to the Decade;
   - (b) Conclusions.
2. Role of the Special Committee in facilitating the decolonization of the Non-Self-Governing Territories:
   - (a) Developing criteria or indicators on self-government;
   - (b) Developing an education campaign for the Non-Self-Governing Territories regarding their options for future political status in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV);
   - (c) Strengthening cooperation with the administering Powers;
   - (d) Importance of visiting missions;
   - (e) Importance of the participation of representatives of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories at consultations regarding individual Territories.
3. Political development in the Non-Self-Governing Territories within the context of the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples: the situation in each Non-Self-Governing Territory, in particular, those in the Pacific region:
   - (a) Political situation;
   - (b) Economic and social situations;
   - (c) Constitutional developments;
   - (d) Steps necessary for the achievement of self-determination in the Non-Self-Governing Territories;
   - (e) Views of the participants on the use of military bases in the Non-Self-Governing Territories.
4. Socio-economic conditions in the Non-Self-Governing Territories and their effect on decolonization:
   - (a) Impact of globalization;
   - (b) Effects of migration to and from the Non-Self-Governing Territories;
   - (c) Rights of indigenous peoples;
   - (d) Land;
   - (e) Environmental and climate issues.
5. Development strategies for strengthening assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories by the United Nations system.

III. Conduct of the Seminar

A. Proceedings of the Seminar

13. On 16 May, following a traditional ceremony of welcome by the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Donigi (Papua New Guinea) opened the Seminar in his capacity as Chairman of the Seminar.

14. Kessai Note, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, addressed the Seminar. His statement is reproduced in appendix I to the present report.

15. At the same meeting, the Chairman of the Special Committee made an opening statement, in the course of which he also referred to the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of All Colonial Territories Fighting for Freedom, Independence and Human Rights established by the General Assembly in its resolution 2911 (XXVII) of 2 November 1972 (see appendix II to the present report).

16. At the same meeting, Maria Maldonado, Chief of the Decolonization Unit in the Department of Political Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, read a message from the Secretary-General (see appendix III to the present report).

17. Also at the same meeting, the Chairman read a message from the President of the General Assembly, Theo Ben-Gurirab (Namibia) (see appendix IV to the present report).

18. In view of the fact that the Seminar was taking place on the eve of the Week of Solidarity with Peoples of All Colonial Territories Fighting for Freedom, Independence and Human Rights, some speakers made references to the Week of Solidarity.

19. At its 1st meeting, on 16 May, the Seminar heard a presentation by the Rapporteur of the Special Committee on the role of the Committee in the process of decolonization. (see appendix V to the present report).

20. At its 6th meeting, on 18 May, the Seminar heard a statement by Witten Philippo, Minister of Justice and Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Marshall Islands (see appendix VI to the present report).

21. At the same meeting, the Chairman made a concluding statement.

22. At the same meeting, the participants adopted by acclamation a resolution expressing appreciation to the Government and people of Marshall Islands (see appendix VIII).

B. Summary of statements and discussions

Member States

23. The representative of *Argentina* stated that the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) affected the territorial integrity of the Argentine Republic. He recalled that the General Assembly and the Special Committee had requested that the sovereignty dispute between Argentina and the United Kingdom over the Territory be solved by peaceful negotiations, bearing in mind the interests of the population of the islands. He stressed the position of his Government that the existence of the sovereignty dispute ruled out self-determination, since it would be unacceptable for British citizens residing in the Territory to decide over a dispute to which their country was a party. He affirmed that Argentina had repeatedly expressed its determination to resume negotiations with the United Kingdom and to respect the way of life and interests of the inhabitants of the islands. He reiterated his Government's desire to discuss all schemes that could lead to a final solution of the sovereignty dispute.

24. The representative of *Cuba* stated that the achievements of the United Nations in the field of decolonization, taken as a whole, were among the most remarkable accomplishments of the Organization. He emphasized that despite all the efforts there were still 17 Territories in the mandate of the Special Committee. He stressed his disappointment that some administering Powers had failed to transmit information on time about the Territories under their control and had not allowed missions to visit the Territories. He also reiterated concern regarding military activities still being carried out by some administering Powers in some Non-Self-Governing Territories. He emphasized the importance of seminars for the work of the Special Committee. He stated that the work of the Special Committee would not be easy and it would encounter many obstacles. Cuba supported the idea of having a Second Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. He reiterated his country's decision to continue to work for the independence of Puerto Rico and in favour of the

total elimination of colonialism in all its manifestations.

25. The representative of *Morocco* stated that a regional seminar was not the right place to discuss the Sahara issue, which was already the subject of a settlement plan under the purview of the Security Council. Furthermore, the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy, James Baker, was currently in London organizing a new round of talks with all the parties to explore means of getting beyond the obstacles raised once again by the Frente POLISARIO, which should assume sole responsibility for the delays in the holding of the referendum. He explained that the current impasse in the implementation of the United Nations settlement plan, which provoked, once again the delay of the referendum, was the result, as in the past, of the manoeuvres of the Frente POLISARIO, which was excelling in multiplying obstacles with the aim of preventing thousands of Saharan people from exercising their legitimate right to participate in the referendum. Those tactics have been, at different times, unveiled in the reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council. He reaffirmed the adherence of Morocco to the settlement plan and its trust in and cooperation with the Secretary-General. While Morocco remains committed to the referendum to solve the issue once and for all, it considered that it is imperative that the inalienable rights of all the Saharan population to participate in the referendum be respected in order to guarantee a fair, just and non-discriminatory referendum. He stressed that it was imperative that the refugees should return to the Territory prior to the referendum, as stipulated in the settlement plan, adding that their return was also required for humanitarian reasons because those vulnerable people had been forced to live for many years in precarious conditions in Tindouf camps. Finally, he expressed the hope that the United Nations would assume its responsibility to ensure the organization of an impartial referendum.

26. The representative of *New Zealand* stated that while decolonization for Tokelauans was on the agenda of the outside world, Tokelau's wish to be responsible, as it had been before the colonial period, for its own needs, served to give local meaning to that agenda. For the external observer, that placed the spotlight on Tokelau's internal evolution. The latter, as the *Ulu-o-Tokelau* had described, was producing a future governance structure around the base of the village, which was Tokelau's foundation. New Zealand was working collaboratively with Tokelau on the Modern House of Tokelau project, particularly its capacity-building aspect. Close attention was being paid in 2000-2001 — a period of heightened activity — to ways in which the autonomy of a self-governing Tokelau might be sustained in the future. Over that period the administering Power and the Territory would be working towards an understanding as to whether Tokelau — taking into account its particular circumstances — might be reaching the stage where a judgement might be made as to whether it was, or was not, self-governing.

Representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories

27. The representative of *Guam* stated that under their present colonial status, the Chamorro people of Guam continued to experience negative consequences, affecting their political, social and economic conditions. In 1987, the people of Guam had proposed a Commonwealth status on an interim basis, which among other issues called for the immediate end to wholesale immigration to the island and the expedient return of lands no longer used by the United States military. Since then, Guam had experienced the influx of 50,000 new immigrants, and lands deemed excess to military needs had not been returned to the people of Guam. To date, the 1987 Commonwealth proposal had not received a favourable response from the United States Government. In 1997, the Guam Legislature had enacted a law to actualize a process of decolonization by an exercise of Chamorro self-determination. A plebiscite on the three options, of independence, free association with the United States and United States statehood, was to be held on 7 November 2000.

28. The representative of the Government of *New Caledonia* welcomed the United Nations interest in the emancipation process being implemented following the signing of the Nouméa Accord and, particularly, the visit to the Territory from 23 to 28 August 1999 by a mission of representatives of a number of Pacific States' Permanent Missions to the United Nations led by the Chairman of the Special Committee. This mission had been able to see for itself that, despite some conflicting aspirations, local political leaders were striving to identify paths of convergence. The preamble to the Accord was decisive to the attainment of this convergence. While it

recognized the shadows and the light of the colonial period and its effects on Kanak identity, it also underlined the legitimacy of all communities to live in the Territory and to continue to contribute to its development. This unprecedented statement was the gate that would enable New Caledonia to lay the foundations of a common destiny with suitable political organizations and the acknowledgement of the role of customary authorities within institutions. He added that the organic law approved in March 1999 by the French Parliament had been followed by general elections in May 1999 and by the establishment of the new institutions of New Caledonia, namely the Provincial Assemblies, a Congress, a "collegial" Government, a Customary Senate and an Economic and Social Council. A calendar had also been set for the gradual transfer of powers to the Government of New Caledonia, except for those reserved by France. The Territory now had increased means to achieve economic, social and cultural development, while favouring the "re-balancing" of the North and South Provinces. In addition, New Caledonia was becoming increasingly integrated into its regional environment, evidence of this being its recently acquired observer status within the South Pacific Forum. He concluded that the spirit driving the Government of New Caledonia was to strive to work with one another, rather that against one another, to build together the future of the Territory.

29. The representative of the *Front de liberation nationale kanak socialiste* (FLNKS) of *New Caledonia* reaffirmed that the Nouméa Accord responded to the legitimate aspirations of the Kanak people for emancipation and independence. The time had come for each of the Nouméa Accord partners to respect the commitment that had been made when they signed. However, nothing of the sort had happened; in fact, the first year of implementation of the Accord had been deeply marked by the reticence or even resistance by other co-signatories to implementing it in both letter and spirit. While the Accord envisaged that the Government of New Caledonia should be based on the principle of collegiality and equal partnership, the Rassemblement pour la Calédonie dans la République (RPCR) and France had ignored that principle totally and it had been replaced by majority rule. FLNKS, which had four ministers compared with seven for RPCR, was systematically marginalized in the executive of its own country. Even though it had been centrally involved in the negotiations for the Nouméa Accord and its passage through the French Parliament, France appeared to have become disinterested in the effective implementation of the Nouméa Accord. The constitutional reform, which had defined the principle of a restricted electorate, still had not been achieved. Those difficulties and delays in the implementation of the Nouméa Accord could lead the population, especially the Kanak people, to reject it even more evidently because it had raised such real hopes for building the country together.

30. The representative of *Tokelau*, the *Ulu-o-Tokelau*, stated that for the external agenda of decolonization to stand a chance in the Territory, the situation within must first be put in order. Its benefits must be seen within that context. The Modern House of Tokelau project was the canoe that would bring the people of Tokelau that much closer to exercising the right to self-determination and it required the combined support and efforts of all three players engaged in the process. The goals of the project were clearly set out as were the steps required to achieve the goals in the short, medium and long term. Beyond these, Tokelau would seek to discuss further with its administering Power a comprehensive plan outlining the major development components to be achieved before a specific timetable for self-determination was considered. He added that a major concern of Tokelau was its future economic survival. It needed the support of the international community and the administering Power to attain the greatest possible economic independence. However, accessing external funding for major capital development had proved to be difficult for Tokelau because of the strict criteria set by the donor community and United Nations agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme. Self-determination would only become a reality when there were assurances that the Territory would not be neglected in the future. He stressed that Tokelau called for the continuation of the work of the Special Committee beyond the end of the year 2000. He stated that the return of Tokehega or Swains Island to the people of Tokelau was an issue at the centre of the decolonization process.

31. The representative of the *United States Virgin Islands* recalled the extensive mandate of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: to facilitate programmes of political awareness; to heighten the peoples' awareness of their legitimate political status options as clearly defined in

General Assembly resolution 1541(XV); to conduct acts of self-determination pursuant to these legitimate options; and to provide assistance to the Territories by the wider United Nations system, as contained in the Plan of Action, which had been further elaborated on in the Pacific and Caribbean regional seminars and confirmed in resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. He was of the view that despite that extensive mandate for the Decade, the level of implementation left a great deal to be desired, owing in large measure to the insufficiency of human and financial resources and specialized expertise to carry it out. Further, the goals of the Decade had not been accomplished and the necessary conditions of full internal self-government, with absolute and complete political equality still did not exist in the remaining non-self-governing territories, owing to the prevailing unilateral authority within the current unequal political dependency arrangements, to legislate for the Territories without their consent. Accordingly, as decolonization remained the unfinished business of the United Nations, after the completion of the first Decade, the General Assembly should declare a Second Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, with the provision of sufficient human and financial resources and expertise to foster real political and constitutional development in the remaining small islands Non-Self-Governing Territories.

32. The representative of the *Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamma y de Rio de Oro* (Frente POLISARIO) stated that the United Nations achievements in Western Sahara and particularly the finalization of the voters identification process in January 2000 should be a source of inspiration and encouragement for the international community to further intensify its efforts in order to convince Morocco to fully cooperate and abide by the United Nations peace plan. The United Nations referendum could still be held in 2000 if enough human and material resources were provided. But most of all, the United Nations should be more determined to deal in a strict manner with the technical problem caused by the illegitimate use of the appeal process by Morocco. The Saharawi Government and the Frente POLISARIO had reaffirmed to the United Nations their total commitment to the settlement plan, as accepted by both parties and by the United Nations. The Frente POLISARIO had expressed its willingness to cooperate with the Secretary-General and with his Personal Envoy, James Baker, in their efforts to speed up the process and find a just and lasting solution to the conflict in Western Sahara. The Saharawi side continued to be utterly opposed to any other alternative or solution, which might jeopardize the right of the Saharawi people to self-determination and independence. He concluded that it remained the duty of the United Nations to make sure that a final and lasting decolonization process was achieved in the Territory and that its people were given a chance to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination, through a free and fair referendum. He suggested that the Special Committee continue to monitor closely the human rights situation in Western Sahara as well as the progress of the United Nations/Organization of African Unity settlement plan.

Non-governmental organizations

33. A representative of a non-governmental organization from Guam raised the concern that the Territory's decolonization was hampered by an uncooperative and unwilling administering Power. Guam suffered from unfavourable action by the administering Power in the following areas: the return of lands that had been declared as excess to the United States military's needs; environmental contamination from military activities; an open-door policy on immigration and settlers; war reparations to Chamorros for pain, suffering and losses resulting from the Second World War; lack of coordination with the local Government and the private sector to ameliorate the adverse socio-economic effects of military base closures; and usurpation of Guam's marine resources within its exclusive economic zone. He concluded that the United States continued to ignore its treaty obligations to decolonize the Territory.

34. A representative of another non-governmental organization from Guam stated that the taking and retention of one third of the land on Guam for military purposes without adequate and timely compensation by the administering Power was obstructing the social and economic development of the Chamorro people. Existing policies continued to impede the unrestricted return of lands to the original landowners. In an effort to mitigate the situation, the Government of Guam had implemented the Chamorro Land Trust programme. However, there was also an increasing demand by non-Chamorros that the programme be extended to all the people on Guam. The situation was exacerbated by the

imposition of laws by the administering Power, which depicted the programme as discriminatory.

35. A representative of a non-governmental organization from New Caledonia stated that the presence of colonial authorities had led in many cases to the economic exploitation of the colonized people to serve the interests and objectives of the administering Power. The Kanaks, the indigenous people of New Caledonia, were a colonized people. The situation in New Caledonia derived largely from the fact that the indigenous people did not have an equitable share in the political, social and economic affairs of the Territory. It was the primary responsibility of the administering Power to rectify the situation and it was the responsibility of the United Nations to ensure that it was carried out in accordance with accepted principles and practices.

36. A representative of a non-governmental organization from the Pacific region stated that globalization had had a considerable impact on the lives and economies of the people of the Pacific islands. Structural adjustment programmes, drastic economic reform and mass flows of capital were radically shaping the economy and irreversibly eroding the sociological fabric of these vulnerable island nations. In addition, the high mobility of capital and massive foreign investment were undermining the sovereignty of independent nations and, especially that of Non-Self-Governing Territories. The latter were under the constant threat of uncontrolled immigration. Kanaky (New Caledonia) was a particular case of a Non-Self-Governing Territory suffering both the impact of globalization through massive human and capital flows and their immediate and long-term effects on the rights of the indigenous people. Land rights and the environment were particularly threatened. The concept of Caledonian citizenship as introduced by the Nouméa Accord was weak in terms of protecting the rights of the Kanak people.

37. A representative of a non-governmental organization that works with the people of Pitcairn raised the issue that migration from the island, rising costs of domestic services and imports and a weak income base posed a threat to the Territory. The United Kingdom assisted Pitcairn through direct grants for major improvements and through the administration of the Pitcairn Island Fund, funded by worldwide sale of postage stamps, which provided subsidies for electricity, travel abroad for medical care and ocean transport of supplies. Officials expected the Fund to be depleted within five years if new income sources were not exploited. Nonetheless, a better economic future was possible if new industries such as tourism and the marketing of the island's Internet domain name register were developed. The resilience of the Pitcairn people was legendary and the future could be bright with even a small effort by the world community.

Experts

38. Experts presented papers dealing with questions and issues proposed by the Special Committee, as reflected in section B above. The experts discussed in detail the political, economic and social development of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, with particular emphasis on the conditions in the small island Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Pacific region. The experts maintained that:

(a) Administering Powers had an obligation under the Charter, the international human rights covenants and General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV) to bring the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to a full measure of self-government by allowing them, in the exercise of their right of self-determination, to become independent, self-governing in free association with an independent state, or integrated with a self-governing State. The administering Powers should bring all three options to the attention of the peoples concerned. In the Pacific region the choice had often been free association, a relationship that rested on a community of interests between the partner States and had to be negotiated between them. Different forms of free association had been accepted by United Nations organs as ending a Territory's non-self-governing status, without any clear norm emerging as to the content of the arrangements involved. The exercise of the people's right to self-determination should be seen as both a substantive and procedural safeguard. There were various ways in which the people concerned could be assured of the reality of the negotiations for that purpose and fully informed about their implications;

(b) The activities of military forces of administering Powers in Non-Self-Governing Territories were a matter of concern. While acknowledging important civilian functions played by armed forces, such as maritime surveillance and search and rescue operations, the experts opposed actions by administering Powers in the Non-Self-Governing

Territories under their administration that run counter to the rights and interests of the people concerned. These included:

(i) The expropriation of scarce land in the Non-Self-Governing Territories for military bases and installations;

(ii) The use of the administering Powers' armed forces for internal repression or violations of human rights;

(iii) The social and environmental impacts from military bases and operations;

(iv) The use of bases and facilities in Non-Self-Governing Territories to support military operations, training and exercises by other countries;

(c) Globalization had incorporated Pacific island countries and Non-Self-Governing Territories into the world economy and made them more vulnerable to powerful market forces. Some of the effects of globalization were:

(i) Loss of traditional sovereignty;

(ii) Subordination of local identity;

(iii) Piracy and exploitation of indigenous cultural knowledge through commercialization;

(iv) Militarization of the region;

(v) Creation of fragile, dependent and vulnerable economies as a result of structural adjustment policies;

(vi) Environmental degradation;

(vii) Increase in tourism and socially undesirable impacts on the local territory;

(viii) Increased migration of the population in search of opportunities elsewhere.

Those issues were at the heart of colonialism, thus meaningful decolonization could only be realized if the issues were seriously heeded and practical steps taken to address them as an integral part of the decolonization process.

39. An expert on St. Helena, maintained that the United Kingdom should reconsider its options on constitutional development in the island. Those options should include the present Constitution, as well as the freely determined will of the people, taking into account article 21 (3) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and General Assembly resolution 1541 (XV), to bring about appropriate alternatives to the present situation. The White Paper on Partnership for Progress and Prosperity stated that those arrangements needed to be revisited, reviewed and, where necessary, revised. St. Helena needed to move away from the present situation where the economic level was maintained solely due to United Kingdom aid, to one which generated its own wealth by improving access to the island. St. Helena needed the assistance of the Special Committee to achieve this.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

40. At its 6th meeting, held on 18 May 2000, the Seminar adopted the following conclusions and recommendations:

(1) The International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism has been an important political framework for concerted action in support of the process of decolonization and the role of the United Nations in such a process.

(2) Throughout the International Decade, the regional seminars have served as an effective forum for focused discussion on matters of concern to the Non-Self-Governing Territories and have afforded opportunities for representatives of the peoples of the Territories to present their views and recommendations to the Special Committee.

(3) Participants underlined the importance of the contribution of the Pacific Regional Seminar held at Majuro in assessing and evaluating the achievements of the International Decade and in planning the strategy and future work of the United Nations in decolonization.

(4) The implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples contained in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 is not yet complete as long as there remain Non-Self-Governing Territories that still have to exercise their right to self-determination.

(5) In this process of decolonization, there is no alternative to the principle of self-determination, which is also a fundamental human right in

accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and enunciated in General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV) and other relevant resolutions and decisions.

(6) All available options for self-determination are valid as long as they are in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned and in conformity with the clearly defined principles contained in the Charter, and as enunciated in General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV) and other relevant resolutions and decisions.

(7) Any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter.

(8) The United Nations has a valid ongoing role in the process of decolonization; the mandate of the Special Committee is a major political programme of the United Nations.

(9) A genuine act of self-determination in the small island Non-Self-Governing Territories should be based on the wishes of their peoples and should involve a full range of legitimate political status options based on the principles defined in General Assembly resolution 1541 (XV) and other relevant resolutions.

(10) At the present stage of global developments, there is still a need to identify and implement innovative practical and pragmatic approaches in the search for a specific solution to each of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the populations concerned and in conformity with the Charter, General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV) and other relevant resolutions and decisions of the United Nations.

(11) Specific characteristics of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories should in no way prevent their populations from exercising their inalienable right to self-determination in conformity with the Charter and General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV).

(12) Noting the need for more information to be submitted to the United Nations under Article 73 *e*, the Seminar called for the resumption of the use of the previous comprehensive questionnaire detailing the specific areas of economic, social and political development on which information should be furnished.

(13) The views of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in respect to their right to self-determination should be ascertained under the supervision of the United Nations.

(14) Continued examination of the spectrum of options of self-determination by all parties concerned and dissemination of relevant information among the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories are important elements in achieving the goals of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the Plan of Action.

(15) The participants supported closer cooperation between the Special Committee and the Economic and Social Council in order to promote increased United Nations assistance in the economic and social sphere to the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

(16) Subject to approval by the Economic and Social Council, Non-Self-Governing Territories should be given access to relevant United Nations programmes in the economic and social sphere, including those emanating from the plans of action of United Nations world conferences, in furtherance of capacity-building and consistent with necessary preparation for the attainment of a full measure of internal self-government.

(17) The Special Committee should adopt the report of the Pacific Regional Seminar and include it in its report to the General Assembly as it did with the report of the Caribbean Regional Seminar in 1999.

(18) The Seminar invited the Secretary-General to prepare a report to the General Assembly on the implementation of decolonization resolutions since the declaration of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

(19) In recognizing the vulnerability of small island Non-Self-Governing Territories, the participants acknowledged the work undertaken by the South Pacific Geo-science Commission in the development of the economic vulnerability index and in this connection invited the

Committee on Development Policy of the Economic and Social Council to give favourable consideration to the adoption of the index and urged the administering Powers to apply it as a development tool for Non-Self-Governing Territories.

(20) While the international community must remain flexible in its approach to assisting the Non-Self-Governing Territories in their constitutional advancement, efforts should be made to guarantee their advancement in conformity with the acceptable choices contained in General Assembly resolution 1541 (XV).

(21) All efforts should be made by Member States, when presenting draft resolutions on decolonization to the General Assembly, to continue to reflect the views, as appropriate, of the people of the Territories concerned.

(22) The participants supported the initiation, at the regional level, of a United Nations study, conducted within available resources, on the access of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to programmes and activities of the United Nations system in furtherance of the decolonization process.

(23) The participants emphasized the desirability of holding future seminars in the Non-Self-Governing Territories with a view to educating the peoples in those Territories regarding the aims and objectives of the Declaration and the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. Furthermore, such seminars should reflect in more precise ways the feelings and aspirations of the peoples of the Territories. The administering Powers should facilitate the holding of future seminars in the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

(24) The participants confirmed the need to dispatch periodic visiting missions to the Non-Self-Governing Territories with the aim of assessing the situation in those Territories and of ascertaining the wishes and aspirations of the peoples thereof regarding their future status.

(25) The participants expressed the view that, as long as there are Non-Self-Governing Territories, the inalienable rights of the peoples of these Territories must be guaranteed by the United Nations and its Special Committee in conformity with the Charter and General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV).

(26) The Seminar requested the Special Committee to organize commemorative activities on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the Declaration and the final year of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. Such activities could include the holding of a solemn meeting of the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

(27) The participants welcomed the establishment of a Decolonization web page and request the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat to use this tool to intensify the dissemination of information on the activities of the United Nations in decolonization, with a view to raising the awareness of the people about their political rights and options available to them in determining their political status. The Department of Public Information should use all means of communication, including radio, television and publications to promote the cause of decolonization.

(28) United Nations information centres should be directed to disseminate information on decolonization to the Territories and to the administering Powers.

(29) The participants endorsed the proclamation of a Second Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism as proposed by the Ministerial Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries meeting at Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, in April 2000. They also stressed the need to formulate an updated plan of action for the eradication of colonialism, focusing on the self-determination of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and with the continued use of the regional seminars as a means of hearing the views of the peoples concerned.

(30) The participants acknowledged the efforts of the Special Committee to develop, before the end of 2000, a constructive programme of work on a case-by-case basis for the Non-Self-Governing Territories to facilitate the implementation of the mandate of the Special Committee and the relevant resolutions of the

United Nations, including resolutions on specific Territories.

(31) The Seminar took note of the programme of work drafted by the Special Committee for its consideration of the situation in the Territories and considered it a step forward to implement the Special Committee's decolonization mandate. It urged the administering Powers to cooperate with the Special Committee in such endeavour.

(32) The participants noted that the participation of representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in which there was no dispute of sovereignty in the development of the work programmes for individual Territories should be ensured. They also pointed out that any work programme should include an information and education campaign for the peoples of the said Territories, visiting missions of the Special Committee to ascertain the situation in these Territories first-hand, and a consultation process acceptable to the peoples in these Territories leading to the exercise of their right to self-determination in accordance with United Nations resolutions.

(33) The participants further recommended that, consistent with the role of the United Nations in such exercises, the United Nations should observe or supervise acts of self-determination in Non-Self-Governing Territories. In this connection, Non-Self-Governing Territories should be eligible for assistance from the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs in furtherance of the United Nations mandate.

(34) The Seminar took note of the initiation of discussions between the Special Committee and the administering Powers of American Samoa and Pitcairn with a view to developing work programmes for the Territories with the participation and agreement of the representatives of the peoples of those Territories.

(35) The Seminar welcomed the inclusion in the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005 of the political affairs programme, the stipulation to ensure the provision of assistance by the specialized agencies and institutions associated with the United Nations to the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories and, in this regard, called for the inclusion of Non-Self-Governing Territories in relevant United Nations programmes and projects, including the programmes of action of the United Nations world conferences on environment, sustainable development of small island developing States, natural disaster reduction, human settlements, women's issues, population and development, human rights, social development and others.

(36) The Seminar supported the current participation of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the relevant regional economic commissions of the United Nations and in United Nations specialized agencies and called for increased involvement of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in programmes and activities of the United Nations system in furtherance of the decolonization process subject to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions and decisions, including General Assembly and Special Committee resolutions and decisions on specific Territories.

(37) The participants expressed concern over the military installations and activities of the administering Powers in Non-Self-Governing Territories, which run counter to the rights and interests of the people concerned and which create serious health and environmental hazards and requested the Special Committee to address this issue in an appropriate manner, including calling for the removal of such installations. Alternative sources of livelihood for the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories should be provided.

(38) The Special Committee should continue to encourage the resumption of negotiations between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom, with the aim at finding a solution to the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) and taking into consideration the interests of the population of the Territory, in accordance with the relevant resolutions and decisions of the United Nations.

(39) The Special Committee should continue to encourage the ongoing negotiations between the Governments of the United Kingdom and Spain within the Brussels process, aimed at achieving a solution to the question of Gibraltar in

accordance with the relevant resolutions and decisions of the United Nations.

(40) The Seminar, while recognizing the significant developments that have taken place in New Caledonia, mainly the signing of the Nouméa Accord on 5 May 1998 between representatives of the political forces of New Caledonia and the Government of France, was of the view that the United Nations should watch closely and keep under review the process unfolding in the Territory. The Seminar considered the different points of view expressed by the participants about compliance with the provisions of the Accord and urged the concerned parties to implement the provisions of the Accord in a spirit of harmony and cooperation. The Seminar noted with satisfaction the visit to New Caledonia by a delegation of representatives to the United Nations in 1999 and recommended that these missions visit the Territory regularly during the transition period.

(41) The Seminar also noted the need to ensure that all parties to the Nouméa Accord are represented at future Seminars and activities organized by the Special Committee.

(42) The Seminar maintained that France, as the administering Power, should be called upon to transmit to the United Nations information regarding the political, economic and social situation in New Caledonia.

(43) The participants recommended that the Special Committee call upon the United States as the administering Power to work with Guam's Commission on Decolonization for the Implementation and Exercise of Chamorro Self-Determination with a view to facilitating the decolonization of Guam and to keep the Secretary-General informed of progress to that end.

(44) The Special Committee should request the administering Power for Guam, in cooperation with the territorial Government, to continue to transfer land to the original landowners of the Territory. The Special Committee should also request the administering Power to promote the Government of Guam's Chamorro Land Trust Commission programmes for the Chamorro people.

(45) The United Nations should further request the administering Power for Guam to continue to recognize and respect the political rights and the cultural and ethnic identity of the Chamorro people of Guam, and to take all necessary measures to respond to the concerns of the territorial Government with regard to the immigration issue.

(46) The Seminar called upon the administering Power to cooperate with the Government of Guam to develop and promote political education for the indigenous people of Guam, the Chamorros, on their right to self-determination.

(47) The participants called upon the Special Committee to engage the administering Power and the representatives of the Territory with a view to developing a specific work programme for Guam.

(48) The Seminar noted with concern the depletion of the Pitcairn Islands Investment Fund, which provides needed subsidies to the Islanders and requests the Special Committee to bring this matter to the attention of the administering Power for remedial action.

(49) The Seminar welcomed the participation of an expert from St. Helena for the first time, and noted with concern the continuing socio-economic problems faced by the Territory, including high unemployment and limited transport and communications, and requested the Special Committee to bring the matter to the attention of the administering Power for remedial action.

(50) The Seminar noted with satisfaction the positive constitutional developments that had occurred in the Territory of Tokelau. The relationship between Tokelau and its administering Power, New Zealand, had been conducive to the increased level of internal self-government and the enactment of territorial legislation, bringing the people of Tokelau closer to the exercise of the right of self-determination.

(51) The Seminar also noted with satisfaction the substantial work being carried out by Tokelau to put in place a governance structure, the Modern House of Tokelau project, that would enable Tokelau to maintain its unique identity and

respond to the contemporary challenges of the new century. It acknowledged the collaborative basis on which this project was being undertaken with the administering Power.

(52) The Seminar also noted the request of the *Ulu-o-Tokelau* for the return of the Tokehega or Swains Island.

(53) With regard to Western Sahara, the Seminar urged the two parties to continue their cooperation with the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy, as well as with his Special Representative, and to refrain from undertaking anything that would undermine the implementation of the settlement plan and the agreement reached for its implementation. The participants at the Seminar requested the Special Committee to continue to consider the situation in Western Sahara.

(54) The Seminar noted the important work of the South Pacific Forum in relation to the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Pacific region.

(55) The Special Committee should note with satisfaction the cooperation of France and New Zealand in the process of decolonization and welcome their presence at the seminars and should call upon other administering Powers to engage the Special Committee in constructive dialogue in future.

(56) The Special Committee should express its appreciation to Argentina, the Marshall Islands, Morocco, Nauru and Spain for their active participation in the Seminar and encourage other Member States to continue to cooperate with the Special Committee.

(57) The Seminar reiterated the importance of the conclusions and recommendations adopted at the previous regional seminars held in Vanuatu (1990) and Barbados (1990), Grenada (1992), Papua New Guinea (1993 and 1996), Trinidad and Tobago (1995), Antigua and Barbuda (1997), Fiji (1998) and Saint Lucia (1999).

41. At the same meeting, the participants adopted a resolution expressing appreciation to the Government and people of the Marshall Islands.

Notes

[a] At present the list of Territories with which the Special Committee is concerned and to which the Declaration is applicable includes American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, East Timor, Falkland Islands (Malvinas), Gibraltar, Guam, Montserrat, New Caledonia and Pitcairn.

[b] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 23* (A/54/23), chap. II.

Appendix I

Statement of welcome by Kessai Note, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands

My special recognition to our traditional leaders, members of the Cabinet and Nitijela, members of the diplomatic corps, the clergy and business community, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It is my distinct honour and pleasure to welcome all of you, our distinguished and honoured visitors to Majuro, and to convey the warmest greetings from the people and Government of the Marhall Islands. We are deeply grateful to you and to the United Nations for having given us the honour to host this important meeting.

This is an extremely important meeting not only because it tends to review the steps taken towards the eradication of colonialism, but also because it is being held at a very critical juncture in the history of our planet. This is a special time because we are in the period of transition. We are at the end of one century and the beginning of another, the end of one millennium and the beginning of another.

The global landscape today has changed dramatically since the establishment of the United Nations. As a matter of fact, our planet has, in my view, gone through more changes in the last 100 years alone than any other period in our history.

The twentieth century, now coming to an end, is one of the most tumultuous periods in human history. It has been marked by numerous upheavals, revolutions and departure from the past. We have seen changes ranging from the collapse of the colonial system and the great nineteenth century empires to the rise and fall of broad and disastrous experiments with totalitarianism, fascism and communism. Some of these upheavals have been extremely destructive, involving the death of millions, the eradication of old lifestyles and traditions, and the collapse of time-honoured institutions. At the same time, other movements and trends have been more obviously positive. Discoveries in the area of science and new social insights have fuelled many progressive social, economic and cultural transformations. Similarly, there have emerged new definitions of human rights and affirmation of personal dignity, expanded opportunities for individual and collective achievement and bold new avenues for the advancement of human knowledge and consciousness.

These twin processes – the collapse of the old order on the one hand and the blossoming of new ways of thinking on the other – are, in my view, evidence of a single trend that has been gaining momentum during the past 100 years: the trend towards ever-increasing interdependence and globalization.

This trend can be seen today in wide-ranging ways, from the fusion of world financial markets, which in turn reflects our collective reliance on diverse and interdependent sources of energy, food, raw materials, technology and knowledge to the construction of globe-girding systems of communications. It is also reflected in the fusing of many intractable problems into one common global concern. In other words, we have come to realize now that many of the problems and ills confronting us today can only be controlled or eradicated through effective unified global action and coordination. Over the same period and especially during the past 50 years, the political reality of our world has experienced dramatic transformations. At the time of the establishment of the United Nations, there were some 50 independent states.

This number has grown to exceed 188. At the end of the Second World War, Governments were the main actors on the world stage. Today, the growing influence of organizations of civil society and multinational corporations has created a much intricate political landscape.

Although some of the goals of the United Nations as set by its founders remain elusive today, our preeminent global organization stands today as a unique and noble symbol of the collective interests of humanity as a whole.

As such, the United Nations has demonstrated mankind's united action in health, agriculture, education, environmental protection, and the welfare of children. It has affirmed our collective moral will to build a better future as reflected by the adoption of numerous international human rights covenants. It has also revealed our deep-seated compassion, as demonstrated by the allocation of resources for peoples in distress as well as for peacemaking and peacekeeping operations.

We applaud the good work of the United Nations and especially your committee. I hope your gathering here provides the opportunity not only to look back at the progress and achievements made, but also to look ahead at the possibilities on how the objectives of the decade can be accomplished. You have a most capable chairman at the helm, Peter Donigi of Papua New Guinea, to lead and guide you towards the development of a constructive work programme aimed at the realization of the aspirations of the General Assembly, as expressed in its resolution concerning the granting of political independence to non-self-governing countries and Territories.

I wish at this point to acknowledge the positive role played by the United States in the Marshall Islands transition from a United Nations Trust Territory to a sovereign nation. As a matter of fact, we owe a great debt of gratitude to the United States for having taught us the values of democratic principles and freedom, and for having encouraged and guided our every effort during the process leading up to our exercise of free determination and subsequent political independence 15 years ago. I wish also to recognize and acknowledge the presence of a dear and special friend, Allison Quentin-Baxter, who was intimately involved in the various processes leading to our independence. It is our hope that metropolitan powers with administrative jurisdiction over the remaining 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories in the world would heed the call of the United Nations by accelerating the process of decolonization through the granting of political independence to these Non-Self-Governing Territories in accordance with their respective circumstance and expressed wishes.

I wish to also take this opportunity to extend best wishes and appreciation to Member States, representatives of Non-Self Governing Territories, representatives of administering Powers, experts, academics and observers for your participation and contribution. Ladies and gentlemen, please accept my best wishes for a successful and productive meeting.

Appendix II

Statement by Peter D. Donigi (Papua New Guinea), Chairman of the Special Committee

First and foremost, I should like to thank the President of the Marshall Islands for honouring our Seminar with his presence and for his kind words of welcome and support for the work of the Special Committee. We have listened with attention and interest to your words, Mr. President, which reflect the profound commitment of the Government and people of the Marshall Islands to the cause of decolonization, and more generally, to the fundamental principles of justice, equal rights and self-determination of peoples which the United Nations upholds.

On behalf of the Special Committee and all the participants to the Seminar I express our gratitude for the generous hospitality of the Government and people of the Marshall Islands.

At this opening ceremony, we also observe the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of all Colonial Territories Fighting for Freedom, Independence and Human Rights and take this occasion to rededicate ourselves to the fulfilment of the objectives of the Charter of the United Nations regarding the Non-Self-Governing Territories and the resolutions of the General Assembly on decolonization.

The Pacific Regional Seminar conducted by the Special Committee is taking place at a significant time in the history of United Nations efforts to ensure the fulfilment of the Organization's decolonization mandate in accordance with General Assembly resolutions, particularly the historic 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

On the recommendation of the Special Committee, the General Assembly declared the decade ending in the year 2000 as the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. The Secretary-General submitted to the Assembly a plan for the concerted action of Member States, United Nations bodies and the specialized agencies in support of the objectives of the Decade and suggested specific, practical measures to be taken in that regard.

This Seminar in the Pacific region, is the last one of the series of regional seminars envisaged in the plan of action for the International Decade that ends this year. We are thus at the stage when we look back to assess what our achievements have been, learn the lessons of a decade of activities and look at the future with the knowledge and experience gained throughout this period to chart our objectives, priorities and activities.

This Seminar will provide one opportunity for reflection and assessment on what has been done and what remains to be done in the field of decolonization. The participation of the representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, concerned Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and experts should contribute to a rich discussion of the challenges faced by the Territories and what measures may be taken to address them.

At this opening ceremony, we also observe the Week of Solidarity. On this occasion, it is with a great sense of accomplishment that the United Nations can look back at what has been achieved in the field of decolonization since the early years of the Organization and particularly since the adoption in 1960 of the

Declaration and the establishment of the Special Committee. However, the eradication of colonialism is incomplete. It therefore remains the duty of the United Nations and the international community at large to bring to a speedy and unconditional end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations. In this regard, the cooperation of the administering Powers with the Special Committee is essential for progress to be realized in the discharge of the Committee's mandate.

The Special Committee has consistently invited the administering Powers to participate in the work of the Committee and cooperate with the Committee in the implementation of the General Assembly resolutions concerning the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Most recently, the General Assembly called upon the administering Powers to cooperate fully with the Special Committee to develop before the end of the year 2000 a constructive programme of work for the Territories under their administration. As you know some administering Powers have formally cooperated with the Special Committee. New Zealand, as the administering Power in Tokelau, has for several years participated in Committee meetings regarding the Territory. France has made efforts to enhance communication in respect of New Caledonia and last year invited representatives of Pacific States Members of the United Nations to send a historic mission to New Caledonia led by myself.

Steps have been taken to improve collaboration between other administering Powers and the Special Committee. In this connection, the United Kingdom and the United States have agreed to establish an informal dialogue with the Special Committee and to develop programmes of work for each Territory under their administration with the participation of representatives of the people of the Territory concerned.

We are still at an incipient stage in this dialogue. So far this year, we have held one meeting with each of those administering Powers separately, and have discussed how to proceed in the development and finalization of the work programme for Pitcairn and American Samoa. We will endeavour to make this process transparent and, as I indicated before, to have representatives of the people of the Territories participate in the discussions.

I should further like to emphasize that, in order to accomplish the aims of the Declaration and the plan of action to eradicate colonialism, concerted and sustained action by the Member States and international organizations will be required. I should like here to inform the participants that the Ministerial Meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries that met in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, last month adopted a final document that supported the proclamation of a second decade for the eradication of colonialism. This is a proposal that will be earnestly considered by the Special Committee during its forthcoming session.

Before concluding, I would also like to highlight one development, which should be of interest to all Non-Self-Governing Territories. Small island countries have become more aware of the vulnerability of their countries with increasing globalization and increasing natural disasters. Disadvantages to development and vulnerability can be caused by an interplay of factors such as remoteness, geographical dispersion, natural hazards, a high degree of economic openness, small internal markets, limited natural resources and fragile ecosystems. These issues have been recognized and increasingly highlighted in international forums during the last decade, as have attempts to measure vulnerability. The need for a vulnerability index for the environment was first recognized at the Global Conference on the

Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Barbados in 1994.

Some of you may be aware that the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission has for the past two years been developing an environmental vulnerability index. There are several benefits of producing such an index. The most important is that it can attract attention to certain States that are considered more vulnerable and by summarizing vulnerability based on meaningful criteria. It can be used by donors when considering allocation of financial aid and projects. It will also allow countries to produce a comprehensive assessment of environmental vulnerability, thus identifying areas of concern and approaches to better stewardship of the environment. This is fundamental if sustainable development is to be achieved.

As a regional initiative supported by South Pacific Forum leaders, over the past two years the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission with financial support from the New Zealand Government has tried to come to grips with developing an environmental vulnerability index to summarize national circumstances. In collaboration with several Pacific countries, including Fiji, Samoa, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and, more recently, Kiribati and Nauru, testing has been carried out with country data clearly highlighting the capability and potential of the environmental vulnerability index to measure environmental vulnerability.

Further testing both mathematically and with real country data from representative countries from all over the world is now necessary to produce a completely workable global environmental vulnerability index tool. It is my pleasure to acknowledge that the Government of Ireland has this week pledged its intention to contribute to the costs of the further refinement of an environmental vulnerability index being undertaken by the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission. It is hoped that other Governments will make similar pledges soon.

This is an area that the Special Committee should give some attention to with a view to considering the applicability of the environmental vulnerability index to the Non-Self-Governing Territories and particularly in the discussions between the Special Committee and the Economic and Social Council.

The delegation of the Special Committee is pleased and honoured to welcome all participants to the seminar and looks forward to a lively exchange of views and to your ideas regarding the future work of the Committee. We value your recommendations and constructive criticism. I am confident that these three days of discussions will enlighten us and help us forge ahead with our work. Thank you all for attending and for your continued support.

Appendix III

Message from the Secretary-General

On the occasion of the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of All Colonial Territories Fighting for Freedom, Independence and Human Rights, it gives me great pleasure to convey my greetings to the Special Committee and to all who have gathered at Majuro, Marshall Islands for the Pacific Regional Seminar of the Special Committee.

This year marks the end of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, providing us with an opportunity to reflect on our progress and to assess what steps remain to be taken if we are to ensure that the process of decolonization is brought to a successful conclusion. Since the adoption in 1960 of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, more than 80 million people have achieved their independence. Yet the process of decolonization has not been completed; there remain 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories.

I encourage all the administering Powers, the representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, concerned Member States, intergovernmental organizations and relevant experts to support the activities of the Special Committee. Decolonization is one of the great success stories of the last half-century; we must see the process through to its end.

In that spirit, I would like to extend my best wishes to all the participants in this Seminar and to wish you all success in your endeavours.

Appendix IV

Message from the President of the General Assembly

I wish to salute the Special Committee, now holding its Pacific Regional Seminar to review the political, economic and social conditions in the small island Non-Self-Governing Territories at Majuro, Marshall Islands, as it observes the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of All Colonial Territories Fighting for Freedom, Independence and Human Rights.

This occasion has a special meaning for me as a national of Namibia, which until its independence in 1990 was a Non-Self-Governing Territory under United Nations administration, even through apartheid South Africa flouted the international responsibility over the country. I have personally been closely associated with the work of the United Nations to bring about the eradication of colonialism.

The observance of the Week of Solidarity started in the early 1970s, at a time when there were about 40 Non-Self-Governing Territories, several of them in Africa. The General Assembly, conscious of the need of the peoples and the national liberation movements of those Territories for assistance and support in their struggle for freedom and independence, appealed to the international community to hold annually a Week of Solidarity with the Colonial Peoples of Southern Africa and Guinea (Bissau) and Cape Verde Fighting for Freedom, Independence and Equal Rights. It then proposed that the Week should begin on 25 May, Africa Liberation Day.

Following the accession to independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, the title of the Week of Solidarity was changed to encompass the peoples of the remaining Territories. Since 1972, when the Week was proclaimed, many of the Territories that were then non-self-governing have attained independence and become Members of the United Nations.

However, to this day, 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories still remain under the watchful eye of the Special Committee. The Special Committee's monitoring of the situation in the Territories and its indefatigable efforts to ensure the implementation of the 1960 Declaration constitute an important contribution of the United Nations in promoting peace and security, social progress and better standards of living in a world of freedom.

This year marks the end of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. During the Decade, Namibia proclaimed its independence and became a member of the United Nations. The people of East Timor chose the path to independence. The people of New Caledonia established a new relationship with the administering Power through the signing of the Nouméa Accord leading to greater self-government and the holding of a referendum on the future status of the Territory within 15 to 20 years. In Tokelau, the people have continued to build appropriate structures and arrangements while they keep the issue of self-determination under active consideration, in close cooperation with the administering Power. And yet, despite these encouraging developments, the process of decolonization is far from over. It is therefore evident that the eradication of colonialism should continue to be an urgent goal of the United Nations.

The observance of the Week of Solidarity provides an opportunity for the international community to recommit itself to the necessity of bringing colonialism in all its forms and manifestations to a speedy and unconditional end and to promote the implementation of the decisions of the United Nations on decolonization. In this regard, this is also an opportunity to express our support for the call by the General Assembly for the administering Powers to cooperate with the Special Committee in the discharge of its responsibilities and to ask Member States and the specialized agencies of the United Nations to provide much needed assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

As the Special Committee examines the political, economic and social conditions in the small island Non-Self-Governing Territories, I wish you every success in your deliberations, and express the sincere hope that the objectives of freedom and self-determination will be achieved.

Appendix V

Statement by the Rapporteur of the Special Committee

In order to examine the role of the Special Committee, we should recall the terms of the Declaration adopted by the General Assembly as resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960. The historic document declared that the subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constituted a denial of fundamental human rights, was contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and was an impediment to the promotion of world peace and cooperation.

The General Assembly stated that all peoples had the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right, they freely determined their political status and freely pursued their economic, social and cultural development. The Assembly made clear that inadequacy of political, economic, social or educational preparedness should never serve as a pretext for delaying independence. It affirmed that all armed action or repressive measures of all kinds directed against dependent peoples should cease in order to enable them to exercise peacefully and freely their right to complete independence, and that the integrity of their national territory should be respected.

The following year, the General Assembly decided to establish a committee that would monitor the implementation of the Declaration. Thus, the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples was established in 1961, by General Assembly resolution 1654 (XVI). The General Assembly requested the Special Committee to examine the application of the Declaration, to make suggestions and recommendations on the progress and extent of the implementation of the 1960 Declaration and to report to the General Assembly thereon.

The General Assembly further directed the Special Committee to carry out its task by employment of all means at its disposal within the framework of the procedures and modalities which it shall adopt for the proper discharge of its functions.

The General Assembly also authorized the Special Committee to meet elsewhere than at United Nations Headquarters, whenever and wherever such meetings might be required for the effective discharge of its functions, in consultation with the appropriate authorities, and invited the authorities concerned to afford the Special Committee their fullest cooperation in carrying out its tasks.

From the start, the General Assembly has requested the specialized agencies concerned to assist the Special Committee in its work within their respective fields.

Originally, the Special Committee was composed of 17 members, appointed by the President of the General Assembly. Currently the Special Committee is composed of the following Member States: Antigua and Barbuda, Bolivia, Chile, China, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Mali, Papua New Guinea, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Sierra Leone, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela and Yugoslavia.

For 38 years now, the Special Committee has been carrying out its responsibilities with a view to the full implementation of the mandate it received from the General Assembly. Throughout the years, it has closely monitored developments in the Territories, through information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the administering Powers and information gathered first hand by visiting missions of the Special Committee. It has also obtained information from petitioners and representatives of the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories participating in hearings and seminars on decolonization. Throughout the years, the Special Committee has sought the cooperation of the administering Powers, carrying out consultations with them and with the representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories formally and informally, in order to submit to the General Assembly recommendations that reflect the views and protect the interests of the peoples of the Territories, including calls for assistance to the Territories by the specialized agencies and United Nations programmes.

In the discharge of its mandate, the Special Committee has faced some difficulties. Some administering Powers were reluctant to cooperate with the Special Committee. The Special Committee nevertheless, persevered in its efforts and carried out its review of the situation in the Territories and submitted recommendations to the General Assembly, determined to promote the implementation of the Declaration.

The Special Committee was keenly aware that in order to reach and educate public opinion to support decolonization, it required an effective programme of dissemination of information. Publications, radio programmes, press round tables, hearings and coverage by the public information offices of the United Nations Secretariat were used to publicize and mobilize civil society and the international community at large.

The successes of the United Nations on decolonization are well known, particularly in the two decades that followed the adoption of the Declaration which culminated with the attainment of independence by several Non-Self-Governing Territories, notably in the African continent. The international community saw a number of Territories emerge as independent States and join the United Nations.

In those circumstances, and with the end of the cold war, there may have been some who questioned the need for the continued existence of the Special Committee. Some argued that the process of decolonization and the need for it was over. They maintained that the mandate of the Special Committee had been fulfilled, that the remaining Territories had achieved self-government as determined by the administering Power and that they were therefore beyond the mandate of the Special Committee. However, in the view of the Special Committee, 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories remained on its agenda and the overwhelming majority of States Members of the United Nations agreed with the Special Committee's assessment that the decolonization process was not over, nor could it be over as long as there were Non-Self-Governing Territories.

In order to expedite its work in the field of decolonization, the General Assembly decided to proclaim an international decade devoted to the eradication of colonialism and asked that this objective be met by the year 2000. A plan of action to be carried out by United Nations organs, Member States, international organizations and the specialized agencies was approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/181.

The Special Committee, the policy-making organ of the General Assembly on decolonization, has been at the forefront of activities to fulfil the aims of the Decade. During the Decade, it has carried out a programme of work that has included efforts to encourage the cooperation and participation of Member States, particularly the administering Powers, in the work of the Special Committee and the implementation of the Decade's plan of action.

The Special Committee has carried out annual reviews of the situation in each of the Non-Self-Governing Territories based on information transmitted by the administering Powers under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations and on information provided by the representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories at the hearings and regional seminars held by the Special Committee.

Within the framework of the Decade, the Special Committee has carried out the aforementioned regional seminars in the Caribbean and the Pacific. Judging from the views expressed by participants and members of the Special Committee, these seminars have been extremely useful in gathering and conveying information regarding the situation in Non-Self-Governing Territories and the work of the Special Committee and in reviewing the progress achieved in the implementation of the plan of action.

Throughout the Decade, the Special Committee, through its Chairman, has maintained close contact with the President of the Economic and Social Council. They have discussed ways and means of strengthening international assistance for economic and social development to the Non-Self Governing Territories. The Special Committee has also attended and participated annually in the substantive work of the Council. Members of the Special Committee who are also members of the Council are instrumental in the Council's adoption of a resolution on international assistance for the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

The Special Committee has continued to press for a strong information programme that could reach out to the international community and, in particular, the people of the Territories. An important step forward has been the establishment of a web site for decolonization. This is a first effort by the Department of Public Information which we hope will make information on the activities of the United Nations in this area widely available. The working papers on each Territory as well as the resolutions adopted on decolonization are posted and will be kept up to date. The annual report of the Special Committee, including its report on the regional seminar, are found on the site.

The Special Committee, conscious of its responsibility to promote the speedy implementation of the Declaration and the plan of action of the International Decade, has carried out a critical review of its work for the purpose of enhancing the effectiveness of its activities. Some of the results of this self-examination are now apparent.

The internal working methods of the Special Committee have been reviewed and modified. With a view to assist the Chairman and the Bureau and promote widest participation among all members of the Special Committee, working groups are being set up regularly to give sustained consideration to specific issues the Special Committee is seized of. In order to promote transparency, all working groups are open-ended, that is, open to all members of the Special Committee. For the most part, the Special Committee holds informal meetings in order to discuss

issues in-depth. When a consensus has been reached, the Special Committee meets in formal meetings at which it takes official decisions.

Another outcome of the Special Committee's critical review is the resumption of dialogue with some of the administering Powers, albeit informally. As part of this effort, a work programme for each Territory will be established, with the active participation of the representatives of the people of the Territory concerned. Fact-finding visiting missions may be also dispatched by the Special Committee in the context of the work programme on each Territory. American Samoa and Pitcairn have been identified as the first two Territories to be the subject of in-depth discussion. As the Chairman of the Special Committee has reported, the dialogue is at an initial stage and the specific work programme and calendar of discussions are yet to be worked out.

The Special Committee is embarking in this exercise guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the resolutions of the General Assembly which have throughout the years reaffirmed the relevance of the 1960 Declaration and all subsequent resolutions concerning the implementation of the Declaration. In this undertaking, the Special Committee will require the support of Member States and the cooperation of the administering Powers. We count on the support of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and civil society, particularly those non-governmental organizations engaged in activities related to our decolonization mandate.

So, though much remains to be done, the Special Committee will conclude its work within the framework of the International Decade with a note of cautious optimism, fully aware of the challenges it will face in what appears to be a new phase of its continuing work.

Appendix VI

Statement by Witten Philippo, Minister of Justice and Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of the Marshall Islands

The Seminar as I understand it, has been unusually vigorous. The Government and the People of the Republic of the Marshall Islands consider themselves fortunate to have been the host of this session. This session was marked by a hectic pace, stimulating exchanges among the participants and representatives. It witnessed the presentation of innovative work that characterized the results of the past few days. Individual members have had the opportunity to interact, catch up with and further their interests. I am sure several of these will likely result in actions in the near future to the benefit of all concerned. The Marshall Islands has been drawn into all the aspects of this session and we have been greatly benefited.

Thank you very much for the invitation to speak this afternoon at this special occasion which marks the successful end of the workshop. I say with full confidence and without hesitation that all of us and those throughout the Marshall Islands are very proud of your accomplishment. I want to emphasize our commitments and firm intentions to collaborate with the deliberations of this seminar. I strongly believe that these will start showing benefits to the Marshall Islands as well as the countries represented here today, in the days ahead. The concept behind the Majuro Pacific Regional Seminar form the very basis of social interaction not just in the Marshall Islands only but also in any community where the negative effects of colonization have taken root. I note the strong advocacy for human rights which, in our view, have been strengthened even more as a result of this workshop. The right to self-government is fundamental and inalienable and it is imperative for the development of countries like ours to be successful.

In May 1979, the Republic of the Marshall Islands became a constitutional Government. Under this process, colonization was eradicated and became a part of our history. In October 1986, our Government entered into a free association arrangement with the United States by our own choice. This arrangement is designed to mutually benefit both sides – no more, no less.

These two dates established an important landmark and first gave us the expression to the true sense of independence, sovereignty and absolute ownership as expressed more eloquently in the preamble of our Constitution:

> "... All we have and are today as a people, we have received as a sacred heritage which we pledge ourselves to safeguard and maintain, valuing nothing more dearly than our rightful home on the islands within the traditional boundaries of this archipelago."

Therefore, let us unite our efforts together to further strengthen and expedite the process of decolonization – this way, all of us and the future generations can be benefited from your aspirations, hopes and actions.

Appendix VII

List of participants

Official delegation of the Special Committee

Papua New Guinea	Peter D. Donigi Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations Chairman of the Special Committee
Bolivia	Gualberto Rodríguez San Martin Member of the Special Committee
Côte d'Ivoire	Bernard Tanoh-Boutchoué Vice-Chairman of the Special Committee
Cuba	H.E. Rafael Dausá Céspedes Member of the Special Committee
India	Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha Member of the Special Committee
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	H.E. Mohammad Hasan Fadaifard Member of the Special Committee
Russian Federation	Vladimir Zaemsky Member of the Special Committee
Syrian Arab Republic	Fayssal Mekdad Rapporteur of the Special Committee

States Members of the United Nations

Argentina	Mateo Estremé
Chile*	Juan Eduardo Eguiguren Manahi Pakarati
Indonesia*	R. M. Marty Natalegawa Y. Kristiarto S. Legowo
Morocco	H.E. Omar Hilale Abderrahmane Leibek Hassane Mae Al Ainine
Marshall Islands (host country)	The Hon. Joe Hanchor Atbi Riklon Raynard Gideon Josepha Hill
Nauru	Ross Cain Rubin Tsitsi
Spain	Jesús Santos Aguado

Administering Powers

France	H.E. Jean-Pierre Vidon
New Zealand	Lindsay Watt

* Member of the Special Committee.

Representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories

Guam	Ronald F. Rivera
New Caledonia	Maurice Ponga Matcha Iboudghacem (FLNKS) Gérard Baudchon
Tokelau	Aliki Faipule Kolouei (*Ulu-o-Tokelau*) Falani Aukuso Lindsay Watt
United States Virgin Islands	Carlyle Corbin
Western Sahara	Fadel Kamal Mohamed

Experts

Carlyle Corbin (United States Virgin Islands)

José-Antonio Cousiño (Chile)

Hon. Eric Walter George, MBE (St. Helena)

Nic Maclellan (Fiji)

Alison Quentin-Baxter (New Zealand)

Steven Ratuva (Fiji)

Non-governmental organizations

Agence kanak de developpement	Jacques Sarimin Boengkih (New Caledonia)
Guam Landowners Association	Ronald Teehan (Guam)
Marshall Islands Non-Governmental Organizations	Veronica Kiluwe (Marshall Islands)
Organization of People for Indigenous Rights	Rufo Lujan (Guam)
Pacific Concerns Resource Centre, Inc.	Jimmy Naunaa (Fiji)
Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organizations	Lai Sakita (Vanuatu)
Pitcairn Islands Study Center	Herbert Ford (United States)
World Council of Churches – Churches Commission on International Affairs	Lopeti Senituli (Fiji)

Intergovernmental organizations

South Pacific Forum Secretariat	Bernard Bata'anisia

Observers

Alejandro Betts

Appendix VIII

Resolution on expression of appreciation to the Government and people of the Marshall Islands

The participants in the Pacific Regional Seminar,

Having met from 16 to 18 May 2000 at Majuro, Marshall Islands, for the purpose of assessing the situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, and, in particular, the review of the pressing questions relating to the work programme of the Special Committee for the year 2000 and beyond,

Having heard the important statement by His Excellency Kessai Note, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands,

Express their profound gratitude to the Government and people of the Marshall Islands for providing the Special Committee with the necessary facilities for its seminar, for the outstanding contribution they have made to the success of the seminar and, in particular, for the very generous and kind hospitality and the warm and cordial reception accorded to the participants and observers throughout their stay in the Marshall Islands.